

# Surveying Immigrants and Immigration 1

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An aerial photograph of a winding asphalt road on a steep, green mountain slope. The road has several sharp turns and is bordered by stone walls in some areas. The surrounding landscape is lush with green vegetation. Overlaid on the image are seven red, rounded rectangular callouts with white text, each containing a research topic. The callouts are arranged in a way that follows the path of the road, with some on the left side and some on the right side of the road.

**Measurement:  
Integration**

**Polling and  
Immigration**

**Measurement:  
Resentment**

**Sampling:  
Polling AAPIs**

**Survey Primer**

**Measurement:  
Discrimination**

**Sampling: Wild Wild  
West of Online Polling**

**Measurement:  
Race / Ethnicity**

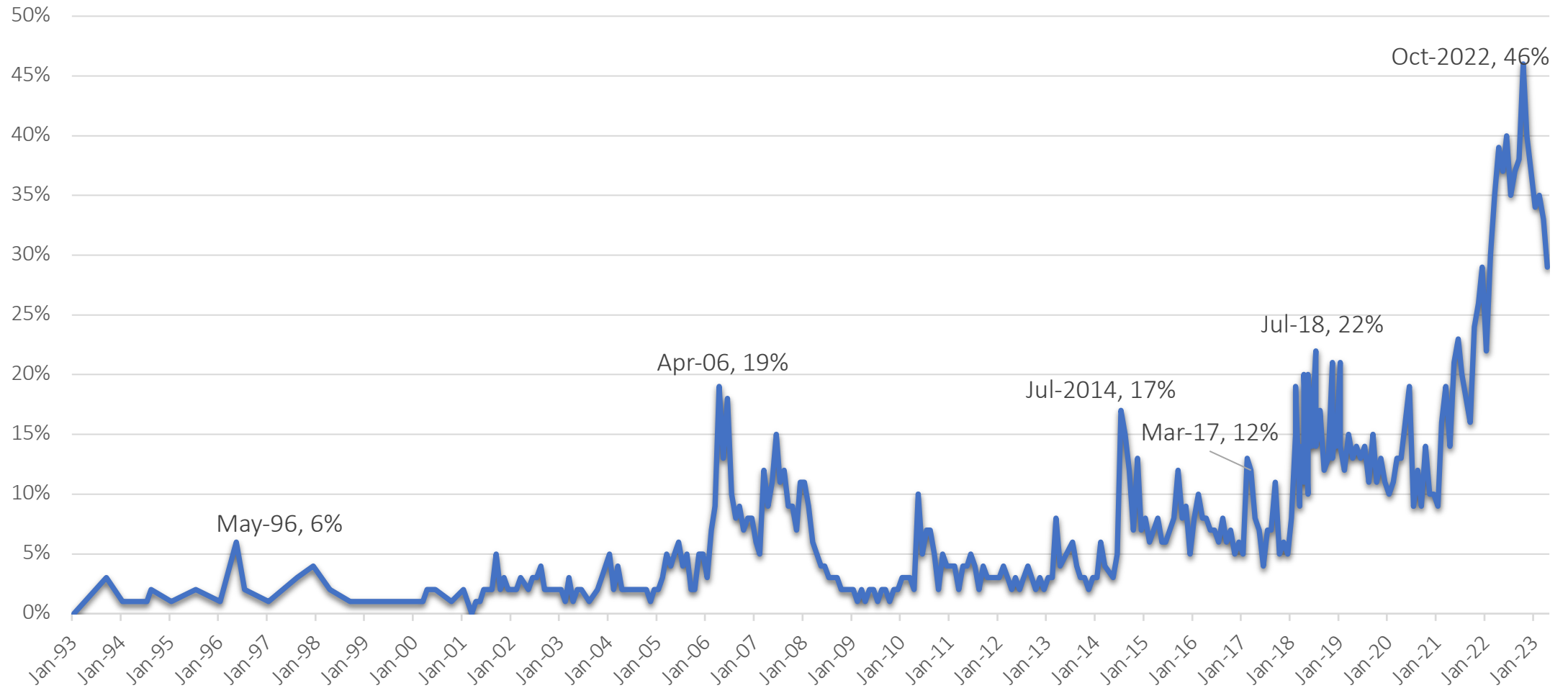


An aerial photograph of a winding asphalt road on a steep, grassy mountain slope. The road features several sharp, hairpin turns and is bordered by stone retaining walls. The surrounding landscape is rugged and green, with a valley visible in the distance. In the top right corner, there is a red rounded rectangle with a yellow border containing the text "Polling and Immigration".

## Polling and Immigration

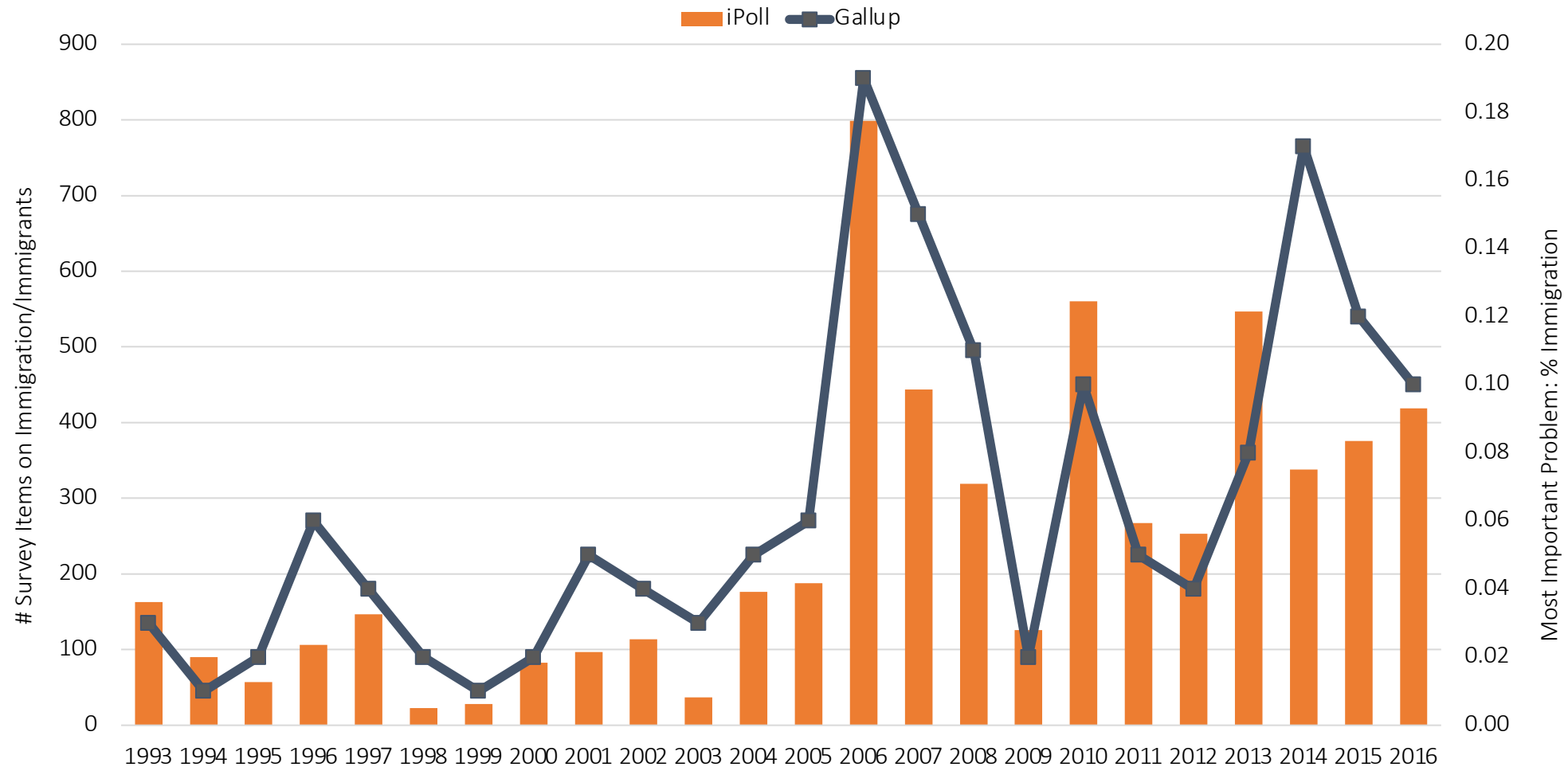


# Issue Salience – "Immigration"



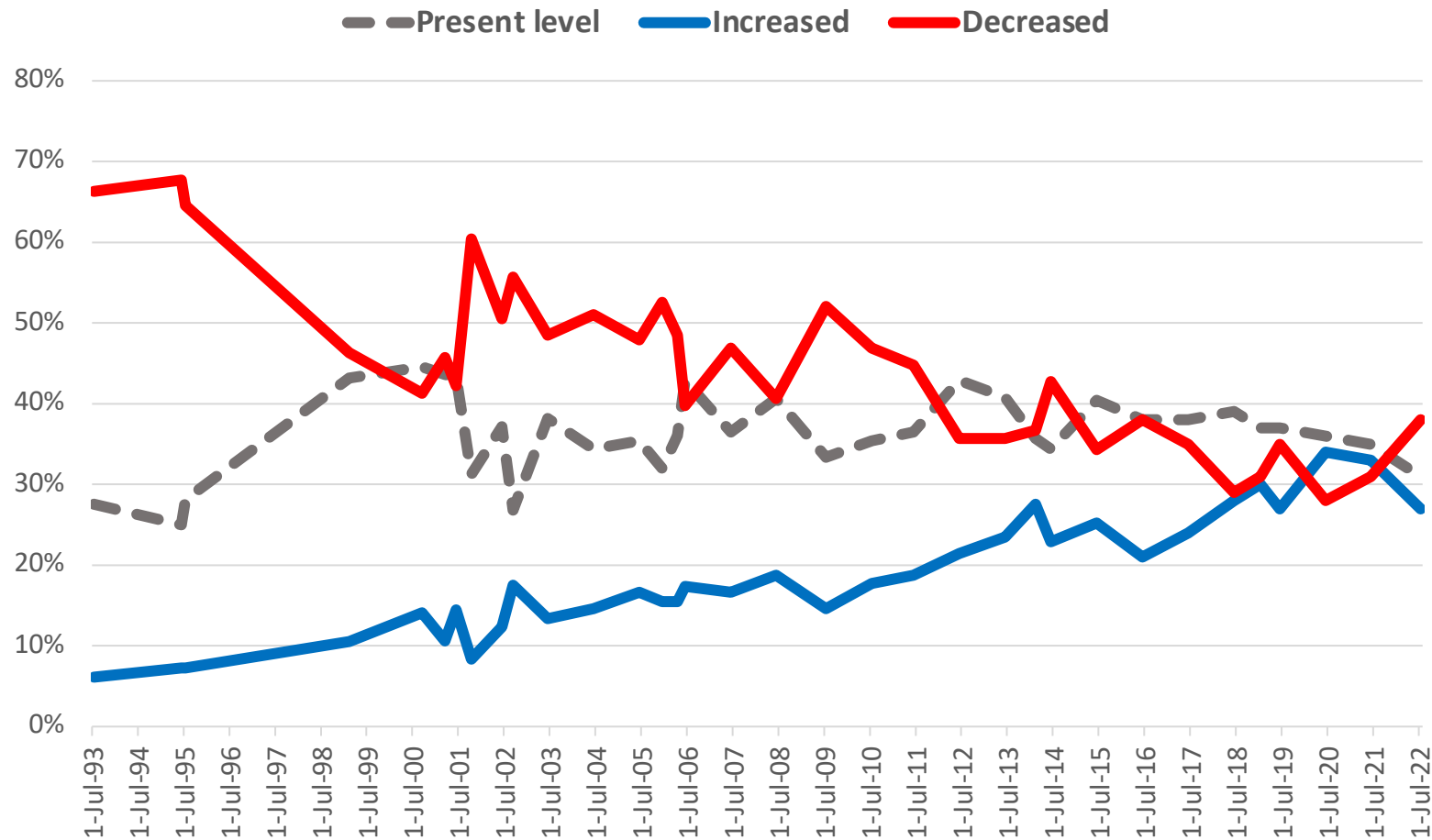
Source: Gallup polls

# Polling and Issue Salience



Source: Gallup polls and Roper iPoll database

# Content: Trend Data

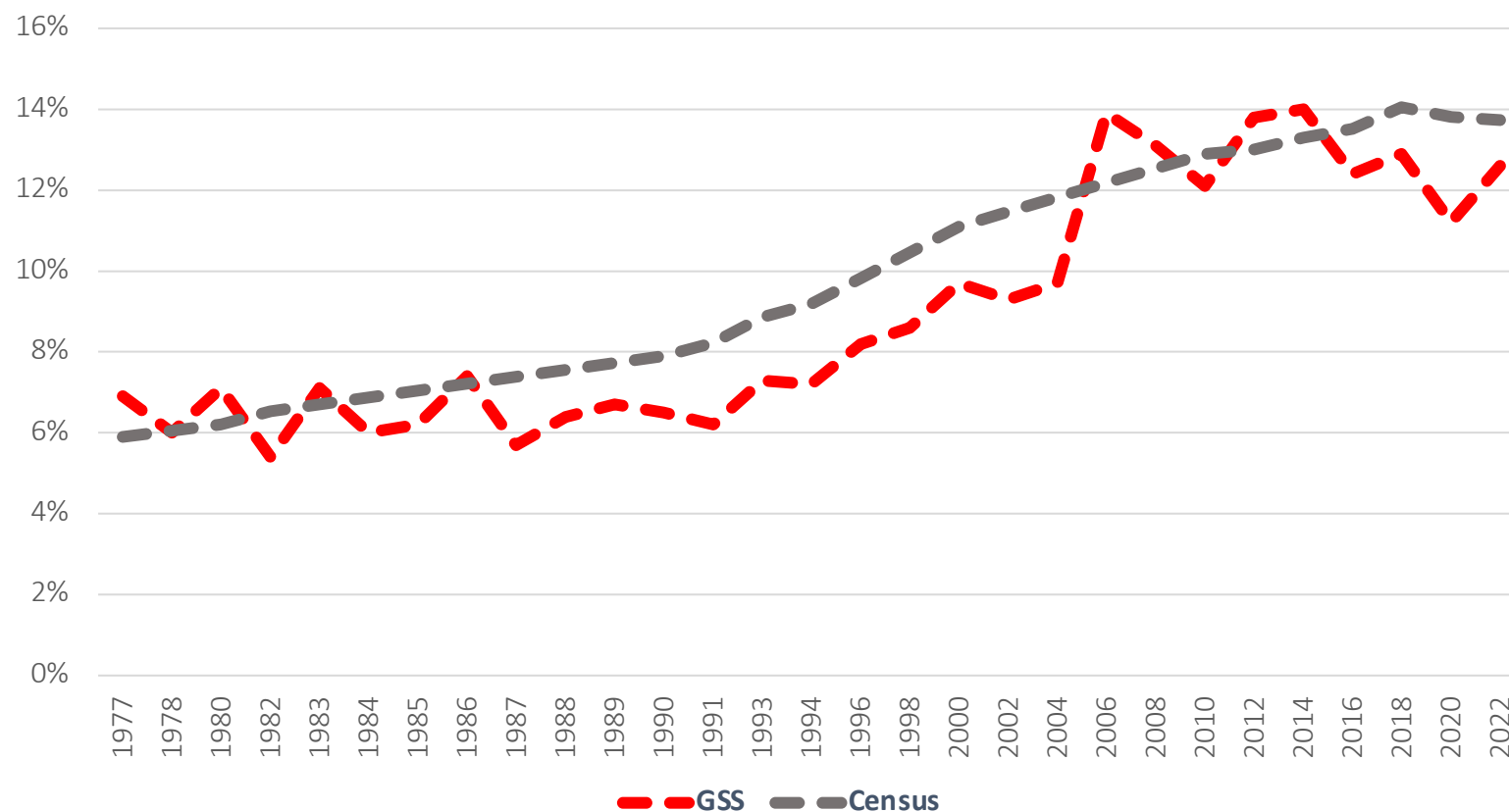


"Should immigration be kept at its present level, increased or decreased?"

- Trend data are rare and limited.
- These trend data would suggest a period of liberalization of views on immigration during a period of deep division and heightened nativism.

# Composition: Immigrants in Your Sample

Foreign-Born Pop (Census) and Sample (GSS)



Composition is not limited to surveys that target foreign-born samples or racial/ethnic groups with large immigrant 1st and 2nd sub-groups.

What may be interpreted as changes in public opinion may instead be changes in the composition of the "public"

# Content: Types of Questions

- **Overall:** "out of control, or not?" "works pretty well ... or needs to be rebuilt?"
- **Levels:** "too many, too few, about the right amount?"
- **Specific policies:** "build a 2,000 mile long security fence ... to stop illegal immigration?"
- **Impact:** "good or bad for this country?" "good or bad for the economy?" "benefits from legal immigration outweigh the risks?"
- **Identity:** "immigration strengthens or weakens the American character" "Our country was founded by immigrants and we benefit from the diversity of immigration"
- Questions **about** immigration, not question **of** immigrants.



An aerial photograph of a winding asphalt road on a steep, grassy mountain slope. The road features several sharp, hairpin turns and is bordered by stone retaining walls. The surrounding landscape is rugged and covered in green vegetation, with a valley visible in the distance. Two red callout boxes with white text are overlaid on the right side of the image.

Polling and  
Immigration

Survey Primer



# Primers

- Surveys and "public opinion" as a concept
- Parallel processes and dual inferences in survey research
- Sampling
- Measurement



# Primers

→ Surveys and "public opinion" as a concept

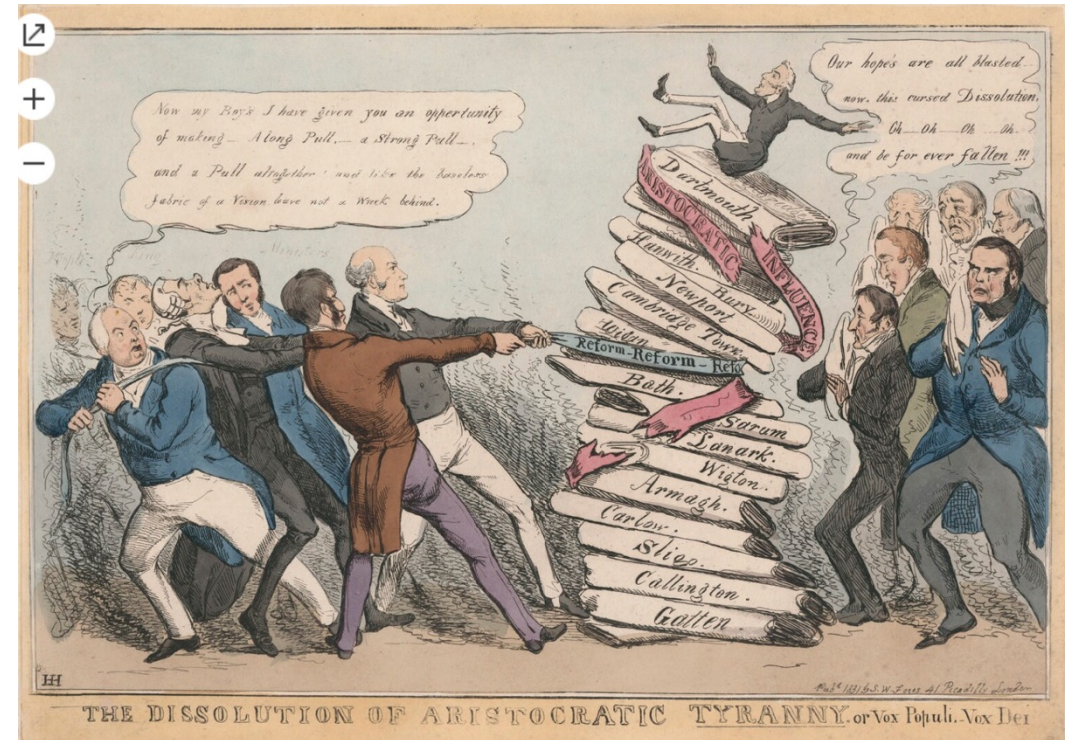
# Normative Force of Public Opinion

- **James Bryce (1895):** “Towering over Presidents and State governors, over Congress and State legislatures, over conventions and vast machinery of party, public opinion stands out, in the United States, as the great source of power, *the master of servants* who tremble before it.”
- **Alexander Hamilton (1787):** "The republican principle demands that the deliberative sense of the community guide the conduct of those to whom they entrust the management of their affairs; but it does not require an unqualified complaisance to *every sudden breeze of passion*, or to *every transient impulse* which the people may receive from *the arts of men*, who flatter their prejudices to betray their interest."
- **H.L. Mencken (1920):** "As democracy is perfected, the office of the President represents, more and more closely, the inner soul of the people. On some great and glorious day, the plain folks of the land will reach their heart's desire at last and the White House will be occupied by a downright fool and a complete narcissistic moron."



# What is Public Opinion?

- **Henry Maine (1914):** “*Vox Populi* may be *Vox Dei*, but very little attention shows that there has never been agreement as to what *Vox* means or as to what *Populus* means.”
- **V.O. Key (1961):** “those opinions held by private persons which governments find it prudent to heed.”



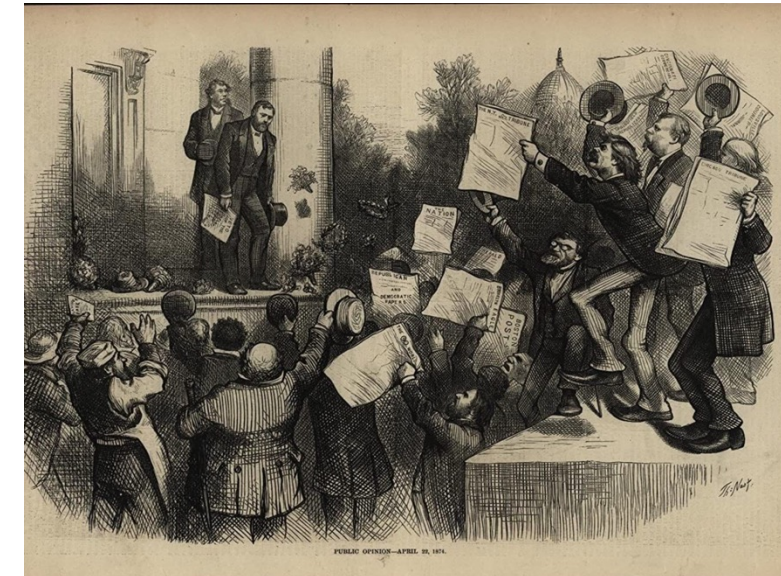
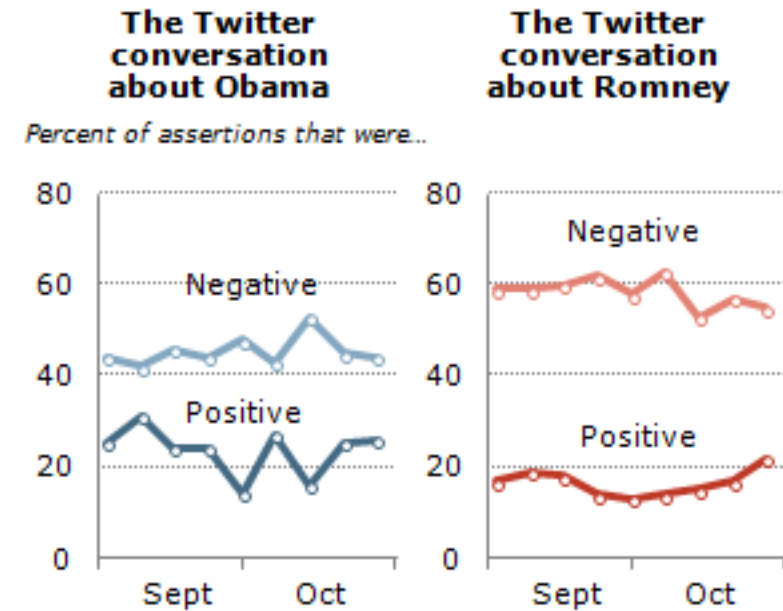
# Varieties of "Opinions Held"

## TECHNIQUES

Oratory/rhetoric  
Printing  
Crowds  
Petitions  
Salons & coffeehouses  
Revolutions  
Strikes  
General elections  
Straw polls  
Modern newspapers  
Letters to officials and editors  
Sample survey  
Email, bulletin boards, chatrooms  
Blogs, tweets, searches, public comments

## PERIOD

5<sup>th</sup> century, BC  
16<sup>th</sup> century  
17<sup>th</sup> century  
late 17<sup>th</sup> century  
late 17<sup>th</sup>/early 18<sup>th</sup> c.  
late 18<sup>th</sup> century  
19<sup>th</sup> century  
19<sup>th</sup> century  
1820s  
mid-19<sup>th</sup> century  
mid-19<sup>th</sup> century  
1930s  
1990s  
21<sup>st</sup> century

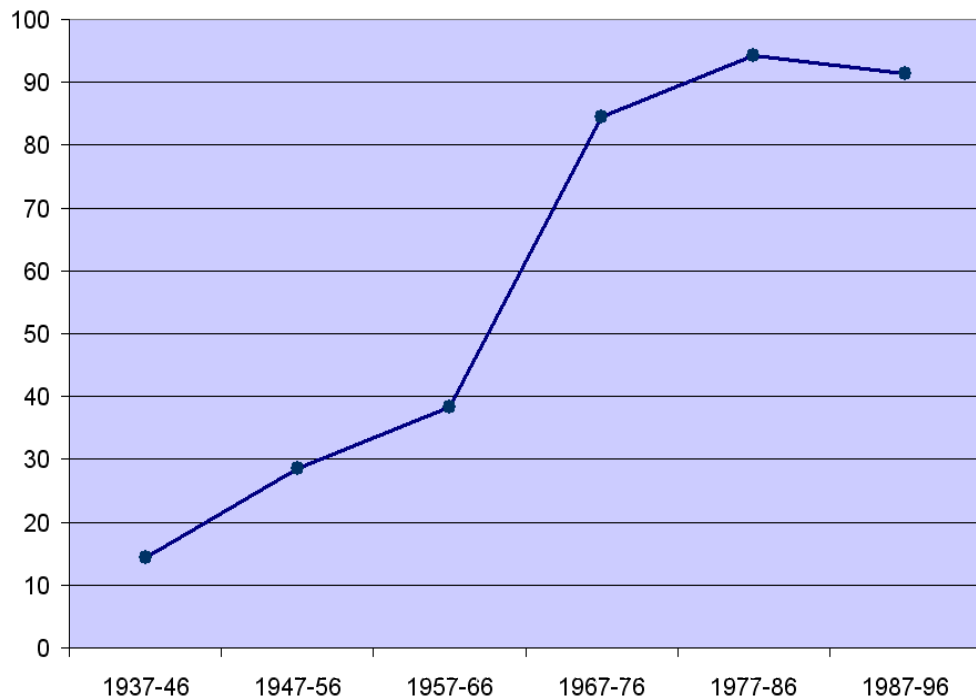




# Normative Force of Survey Research

- **Archibald Crossley (1937):** “Scientific polling makes it possible within two or three days at moderate expense for the entire nation to work hand in hand with its legislative representatives, on laws which affect our daily lives. Here is the long-sought key to *“Government by the people.”*”
- **Sidney Verba (1996):** “Surveys produce just what democracy is supposed to produce—equal representation of all citizens.”
- **Henry Brady (2000):** "Like telescopes in astronomy, microscopes in biology, and seismic, weather, and environmental sensors in the geosciences, surveys have features that make them a fundamental data collection method for the social sciences."

# "Public Opinion" in Practice



- **Philip Converse (1987):** “It is exactly this kind of ‘one person, one vote’ tally of opinions as routinely reported today by polls and surveys which has now become the consensual understanding of the world around as to a baseline of public opinion.”
- **John Zaller (1992):** “Virtually everyone now takes survey responses as constituting public opinion.”



# POQ Wordle, 1937-59



Source: <https://blogs.rti.org/surveypost/>

# POQ Wordle, 1960-89



Source: <https://blogs.rti.org/surveypost/>



# POQ Wordle, 1990-2012



Source: <https://blogs.rti.org/surveypost/>

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- Surveys and "public opinion" as a concept
- Parallel processes and dual inferences in survey research

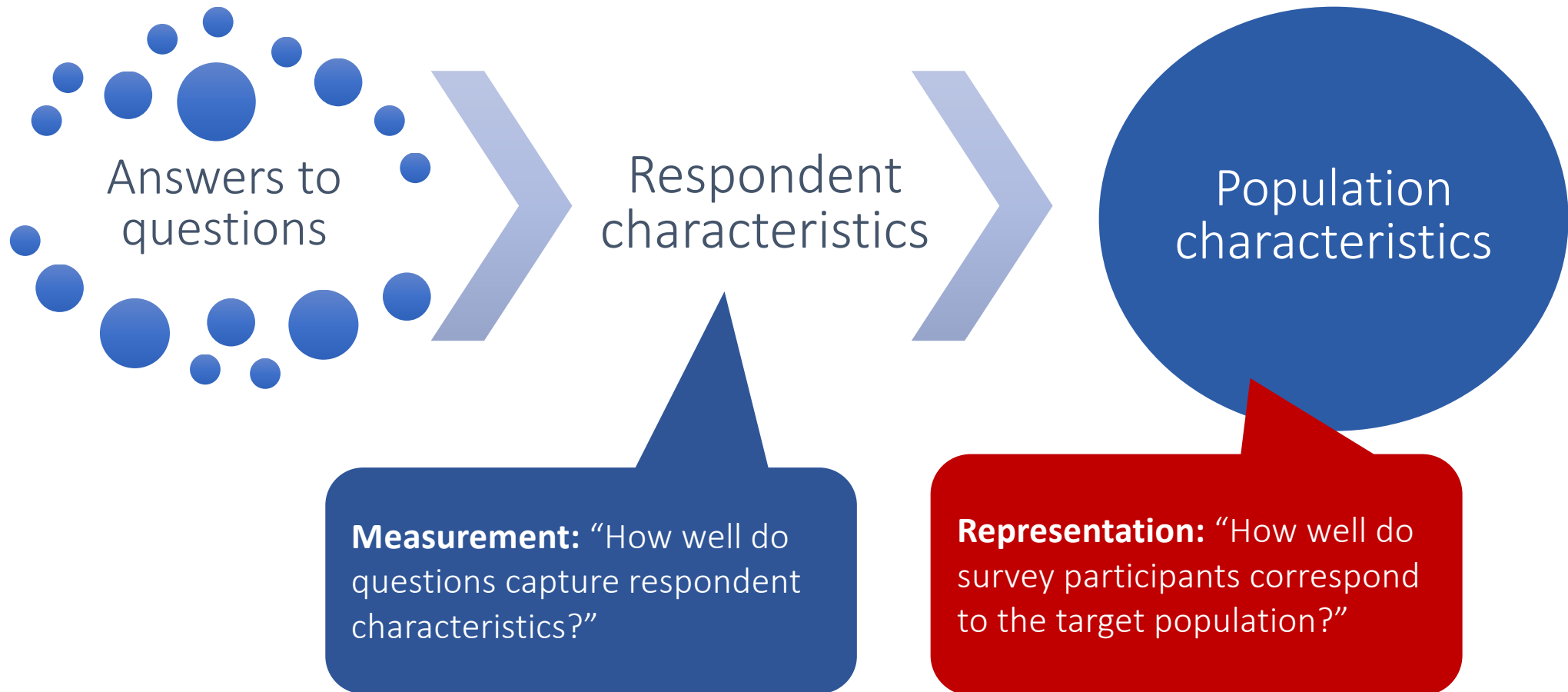


# So, You Want to Do a Survey?

Three questions to ask and answer:

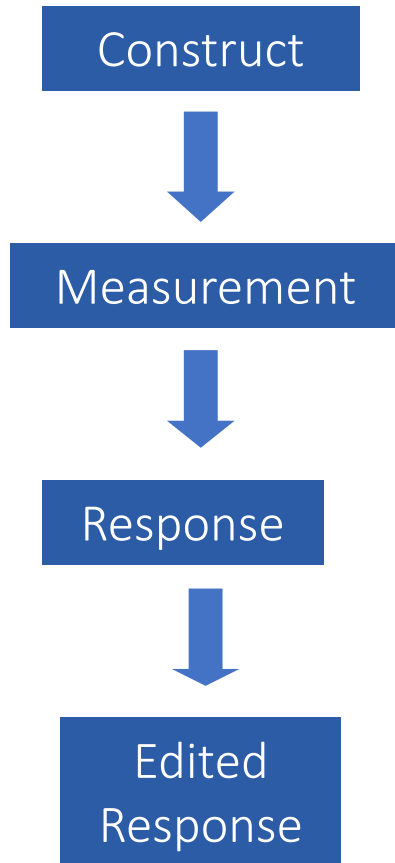
- Who do you want to ask?
- What do you want to ask?
- How much do you have?

# Two Types of Inference





# Measurement



***What you want to know about:***

Immigration views; experience of bias; voter turnout; consumer sentiment; etc.

***How you want to measure it:***

Questions (“Should immigration be kept at its present level, increased or decreased?”)

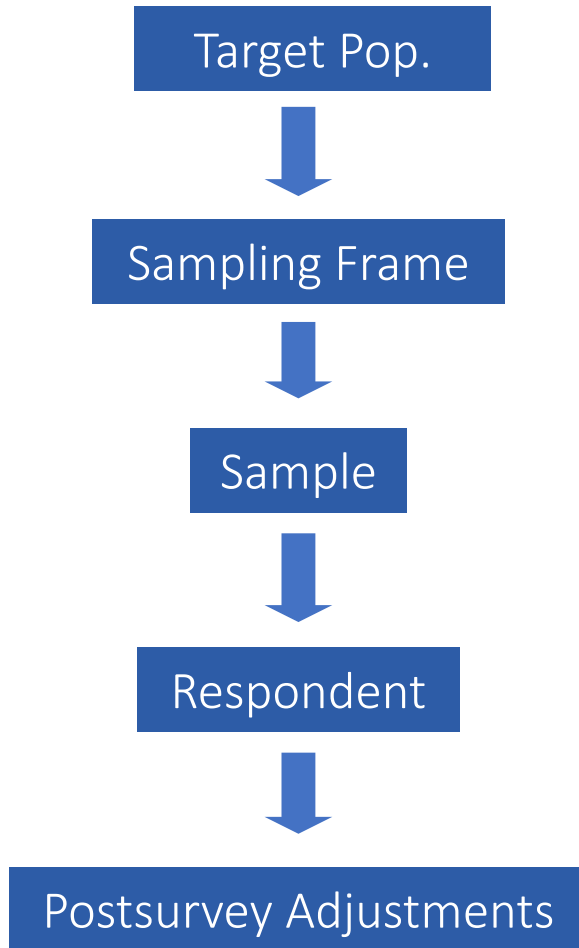
***Which categories of reply:***

“increased / decreased / kept same”; “don't know”; refused to answer; Likert scale; feeling thermometer; factor scores / latent variables; list experiments.

***What you actually analyze:***

After outliers, coding errors, processing errors, etc., these are final data from which inference is drawn about the construct for an individual respondent

# Representativeness



**Who** you want to study (e.g., adult citizens in the US; immigrant 1.5 generation Latinx in Texas; high-skilled laborers in Silicon Valley)

**“Universe of cases”** with a non-zero probability of selection into your study. (consider phone numbers as sampling frame – for all phone users versus all adult Americans versus all first generation Southeast Asians 65 and older.)

The sample is the **actual list** from which measurement is sought. In most cases, a subset of sampling frame (e.g., subset of phone numbers, email addresses, postal addresses).

The **successfully measured** cases in your sample. Non-respondents is the complement in the sample.

**Post-measurement weights** to fit on population parameters. (usually benchmarked to demographic characteristics, using Census data).



# Total Survey Error Approach

- **Measurement error:** observational gap btw. ideal measurement and observed response.
- **Coverage error:** non-observational gap btw. target population and sampling frame.
- **Sampling error:** non-observational gap btw. sampling frame and the sample.
- **Non-response error:** non-observational gap btw. sample and respondent pool.
- **Processing error:** observational gap btw. variable construction and observed response (including coding, data entry, transcription, disclosure avoidance errors).
- **Adjustment error:** non-observational errors from mistakes in assigning post-survey adjustment (e.g., variables used in weights).

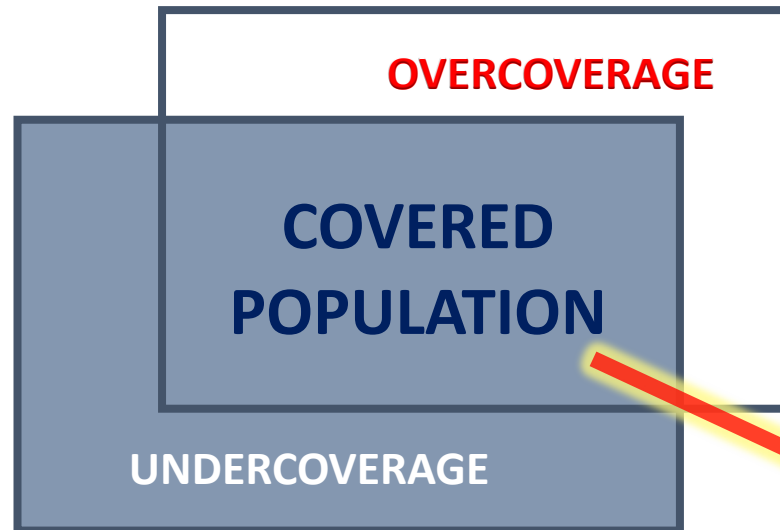
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- Sampling



# Sampling and Coverage

**OVERCOVERAGE:** In the frame but not members of the target population (i.e.: business telephone numbers)



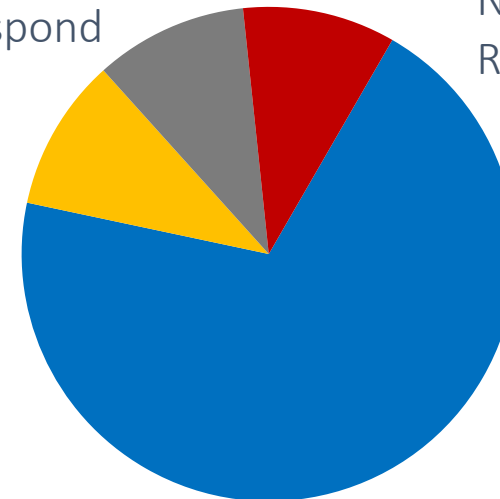
**UNDERCOVERAGE:**  
In the target population but missing from the frame (i.e.: non telephone household).



Refused to Respond

Not Reachable

Not Capable of Responding



**SAMPLED POPULATION**

# Sampling Methods

## PROBABILITY

- random selection process
- generalizeability
- more expensive, and time consuming
- statistical analysis is more straightforward (e.g., known standard errors).
- amenable to hypothesis-testing

## NON-PROBABILITY

- non-random selection process
- limited generalizeability
- less expensive, often easier and more convenient
- statistical analysis more complicated (e.g., unknown standard errors).
- more amenable to hypothesis-generation and mechanism testing



# Hard to Sample Populations

- Racial minorities
- Immigrants
- Indigenous populations
- Sexual and gender minorities
- Linguistic and cultural minorities
- Institutionalized populations (hospitals, prisons, dorms, etc.)
- Mobile and migrant populations (homeless and refugee)
- Populations affected by natural disasters
- Populations in zones of armed conflict
- Stigmatized populations
- Populations that distrusts authority and science

# Primers

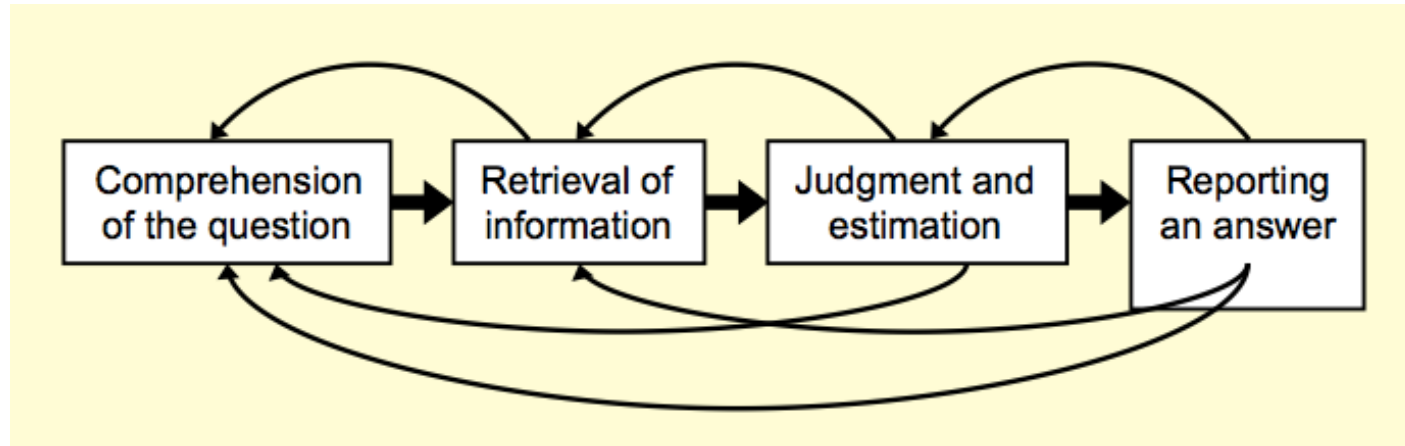
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- Measurement



# Measurement and "Non-attitudes"

- **Converse (1964):** “The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics.”
- Data: ANES 1956-58-60 Panel
- Finding: only 2.5% showed an ideologically consistent point of view, across items and panel waves. Overall response instability and incoherence.
- Conclusion: The liberal-conservative continuum is too abstract and beyond “the man in the street.” Thus there is no underlying belief structure for most people, just “non-attitudes.”

# A Model of Survey Response

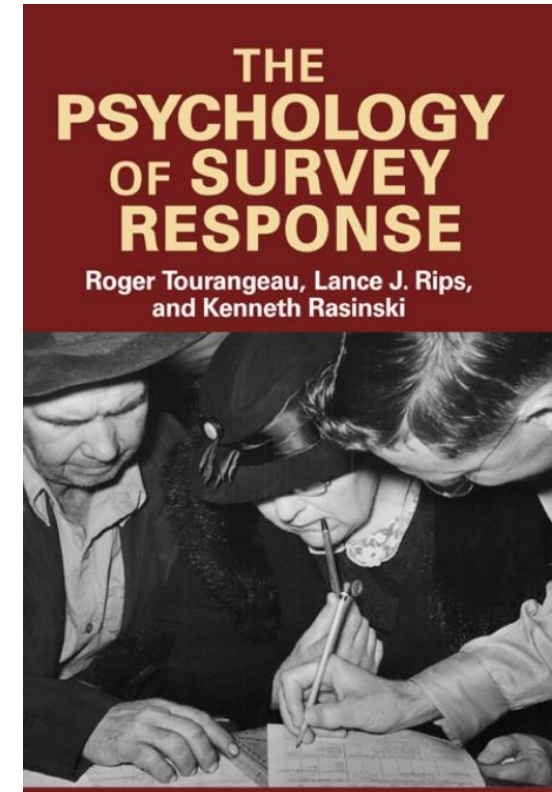


**Comprehension:** Interpret the question

**Retrieval:** Search for relevant information

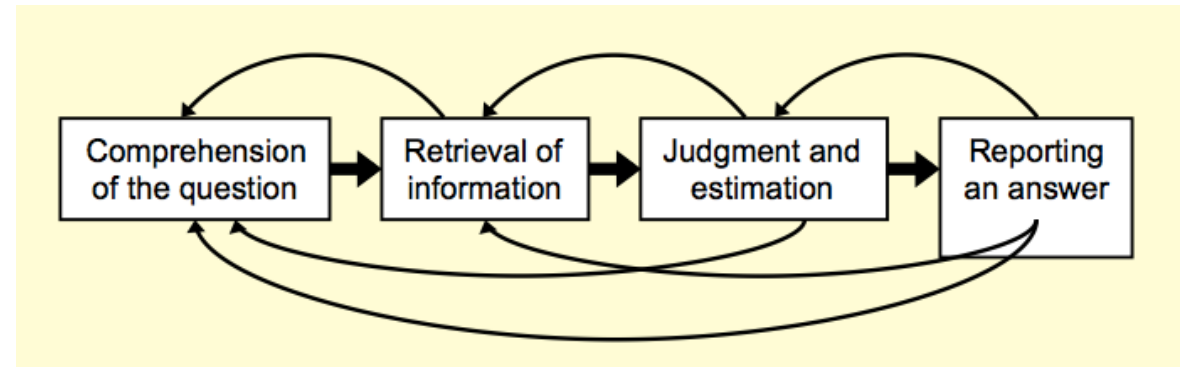
**Judgment:** Integrate information and make estimate

**Response:** Map judgment onto response category



# Problems in Answering

- Failure to encode the information sought
- Misinterpretation of questions
- Forgetting and other memory problems
- Flawed judgment or estimation strategies
- Problems in formatting an answer
- More or less deliberate misreporting
- Failure to follow instructions





# Measurement and Satisficing

- Survey respondents as satisficers, not optimizers
- Forms of weak satisficing:
  - Primacy and recency effects
  - Acquiescence bias
- Forms of strong satisficing:
  - Status quo endorsement, midpoint in rating scales, "straight-lining," "Don't know" responses, "mental coin-flipping"
- Precipitants:
  - task difficulty, respondent ability, respondent motivation

# General Principles of Measurement

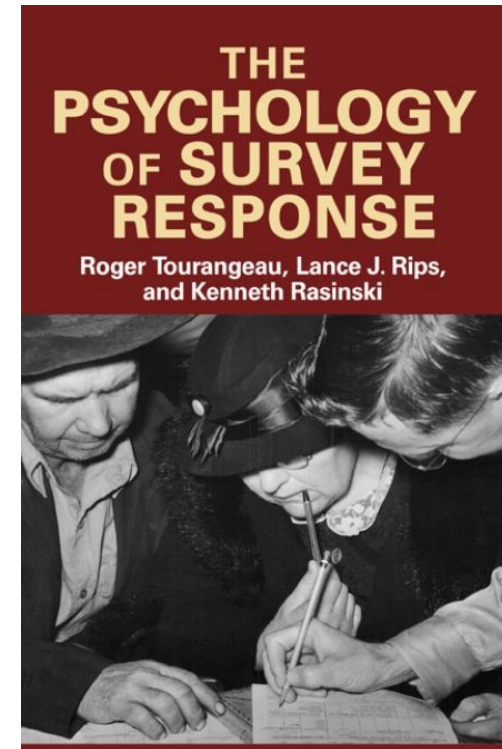
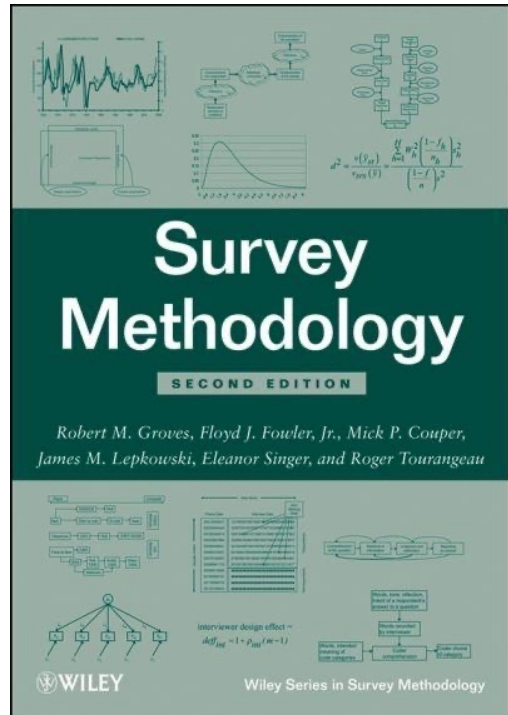
- Do not reinvent the questionnaire wheel.
- Context when possible: topic, definitions, time frame, specific task (e.g., “select just one”)
- Avoid complex concepts or words or define the complexity
  - “tired” / “exhausted,” “work” / “employment”
  - “people who live here” vs. “occupants in this household”
- Other things to avoid:
  - Shorthand (e.g., abbreviations)
  - Negative wording (e.g. “how often do you not vote?”)
  - Double negatives (e.g., “do you agree or disagree that Obama should never not use the term ‘climate change’?”)
- Avoid the double-barrel ("do you want to be rich and famous?")

# Measurement Pitfalls

- Respondents won't always have answers:
  - “How much is your house currently worth?”
- Respondents may not always think about the construct the way you ask about it:
  - How many calories a day do you consume?
  - How many miles from your home is the nearest hospital?
- Respondents may not know about others:
  - “How many of your neighbors oppose the new park?”
  - “Does your mother enjoy the activities in her nursing home?”
- Respondents may not be able to recall:
  - How many different types of participation did you engage in last year?



# To Learn More ...





An aerial photograph of a winding asphalt road on a steep, green mountain slope. The road curves through the landscape, with stone retaining walls visible on some sections. Three text boxes are overlaid on the image: a red box with a blue border in the top right, a red box with a yellow border in the center, and another red box with a blue border in the bottom right. The sun is shining from the top left, creating a warm glow and long shadows.

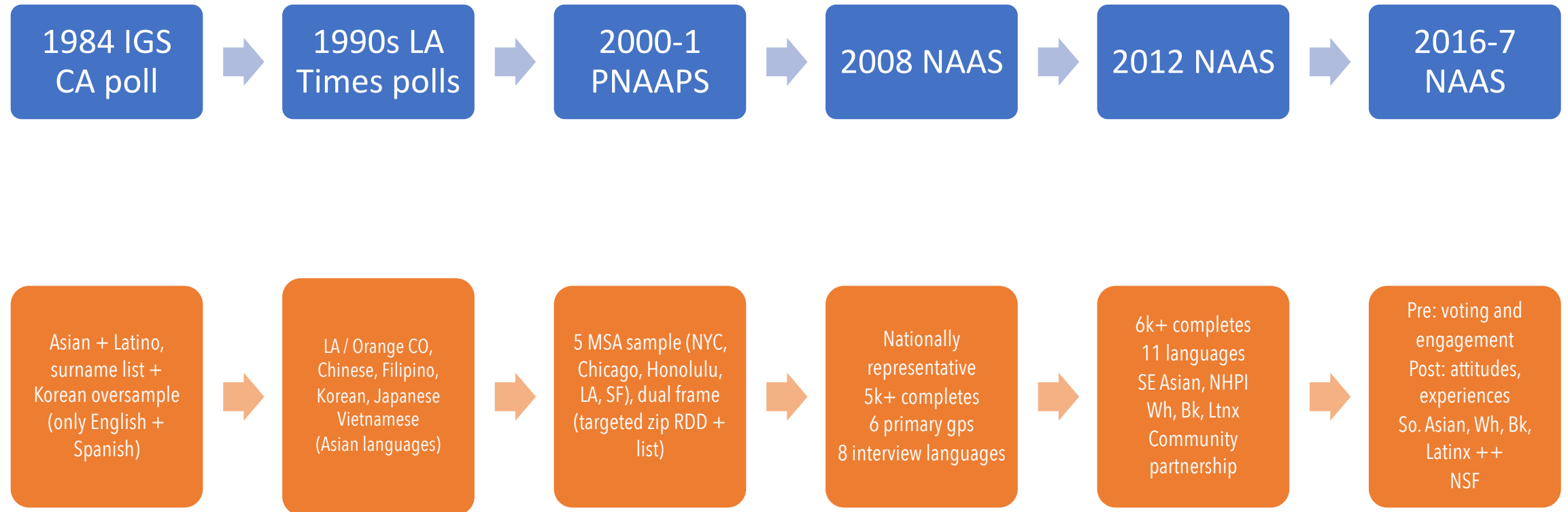
Survey Primer

Sampling:  
Polling AAPIs

Polling and  
Immigration



# Evolution of Surveys of AAPIs





# 2008 NAAS

- **N** = 5,159
- **Mode** = telephone (landline)
- **Field dates** = 8/18 to 10/29, 2008
- **Sample** = national sample and regional (CA, NJ/NY, “new destinations”)
- **Languages:** English + Vietnamese, Korean, Mandarin, Cantonese, Tagalog, Japanese, Hindi (40% in non-English language)
- **Sample by groups:** 1,350 Chinese, 1150 Asian Indian, 719 Vietnamese, 614 Korean, 603 Filipino, 541 Japanese, and 182 “Other Asian.”
- **Sampling frame:** list (with nominal RDD for comparison)

# 2012 NAAS + Community Partner

- **N** = 6,257
- **mode** = telephone (82% landline, 12% cell, 6% VOIP)
- **Field dates** = July 31 to October 20, 2012.
- **Languages:** English, Vietnamese, Korean, Cantonese, Mandarin, Hmong, Khmer, Japanese, Tagalog, Thai, Hindi, and Spanish.
- **Sample:** national, with oversamples of SE-Asians, NHPIs and comparison samples of whites, blacks, Latinos.
- **Sample by sub-groups:** 827 Asian Indians, 743 Chinese, 633 Koreans, 599 Filipinos, 537 Vietnamese, 525 Japanese, 319 Hmong, 305 Cambodians, 251 other Asians, 419 Native Hawaiians, 152 other Pacific Islanders, 350 Whites, 309 African Americans, 308 Latinos

# 2016 Pre-Election NAAS

- **N** = 3,882 (2,238 AAPI)
- **Mode:** telephone (72% landline, 28% cell)
- **Field dates:** August 10 to September 29, 2016
- **Languages:** English, Vietnamese, Korean, Cantonese, Mandarin, Hmong, Khmer, Tagalog, Japanese, Laotian, Hindi, Spanish
- **Sample:** National with oversamples of SE-Asians + comparison groups
- **Sub-groups:** Cambodian (149), Chinese (352), Filipino (252), Hmong (325), Indian (307), Japanese (175), Korean (336), Vietnamese (342)
- **Comparison groups:** NHPIs (305), Whites (456), African Americans (392), Latinos (410), mixed race (54)



# 2016-7 Post-Election NAAS

- **N** = 6,448 (4,393 AAPI)
- **Mode:** telephone (63% landline, 37% cell)
- **Field dates:** Nov. 10, 2016 to Mar. 2, 2017
- **Languages:** English, Vietnamese, Korean, Cantonese, Mandarin, Khmer, Hmong, Japanese, Tagalog, Hindi, Urdu, Spanish
- **Sample:** National with oversamples of SE-Asians and So Asians + comparands
- **Sub-groups:** Bangladeshi (320), Cambodian (401), Chinese (475), Filipino (505), Hmong (351), Indian (504), Japanese (517), Korean (499), Pakistani (320), Vietnamese (501)
- **Comparison groups:** Latino (1,126), Black (401), White (408), NHPI (120)

# Contribution of the NAAS

- **Sampling:**
  - Who: national + regional; "Big Six" initially; other key subgroups (SE Asians, So Asians, NHPs); comparison groups.
  - How: list, mixed cell, language diversity, culturally competent firm.
- **Measurement:**
  - Replication of core ANES (then GSS) items
  - Within-group measures
  - Measurement on AAPI-specific issues
  - Comparison across groups and over time

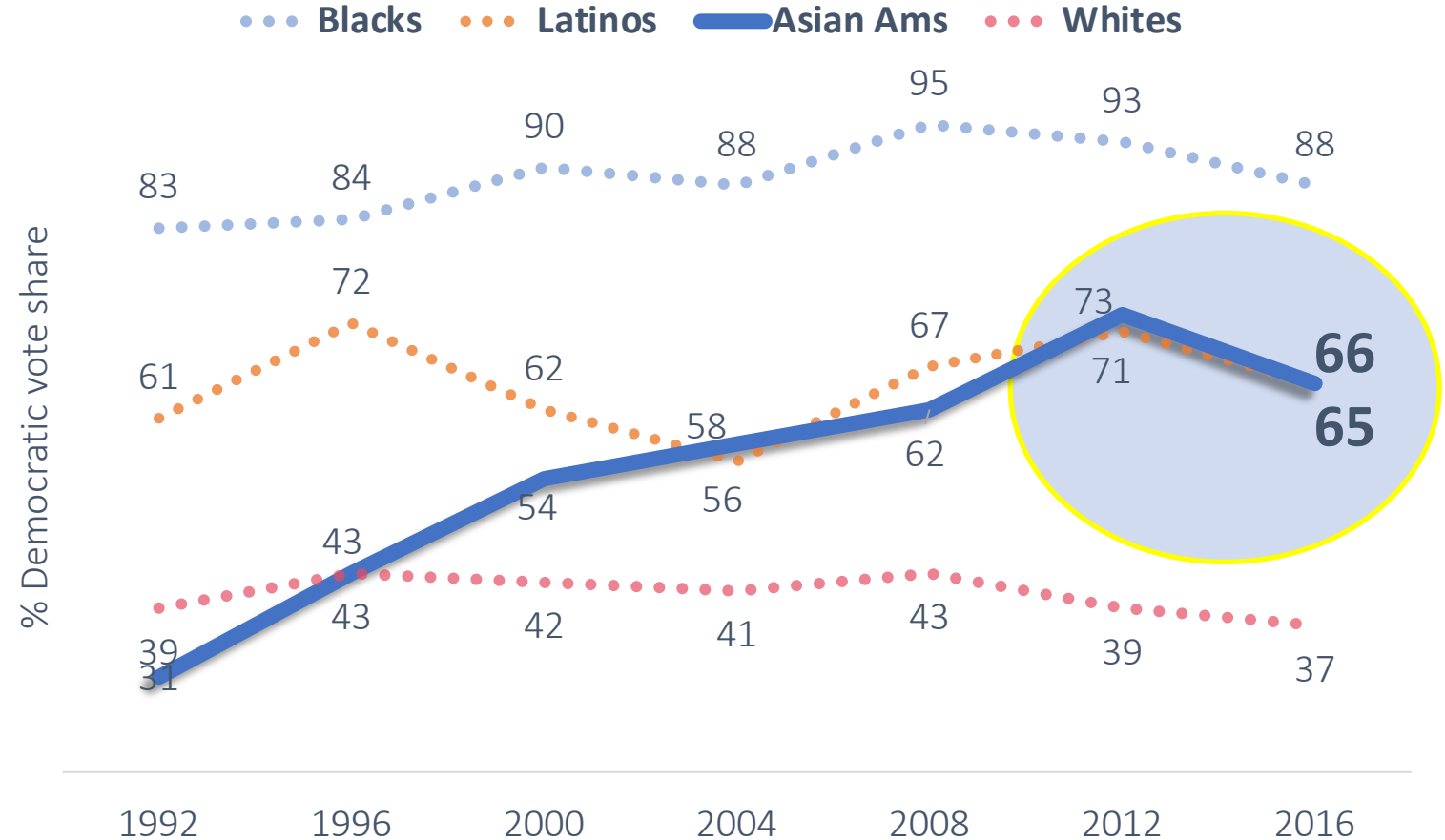
# Example: 2016 Exit Polling

race			
	clinton	trump	other/no answer
white 71%	37%	57%	6%
black 12%	89%	8%	3%
latino 11%	66%	28%	6%
asian 4%	65%	27%	8%
other race 3%	56%	36%	8%
24558 respondents			

Source: Edison exit polls



# Did Trump Really Outperform Romney?

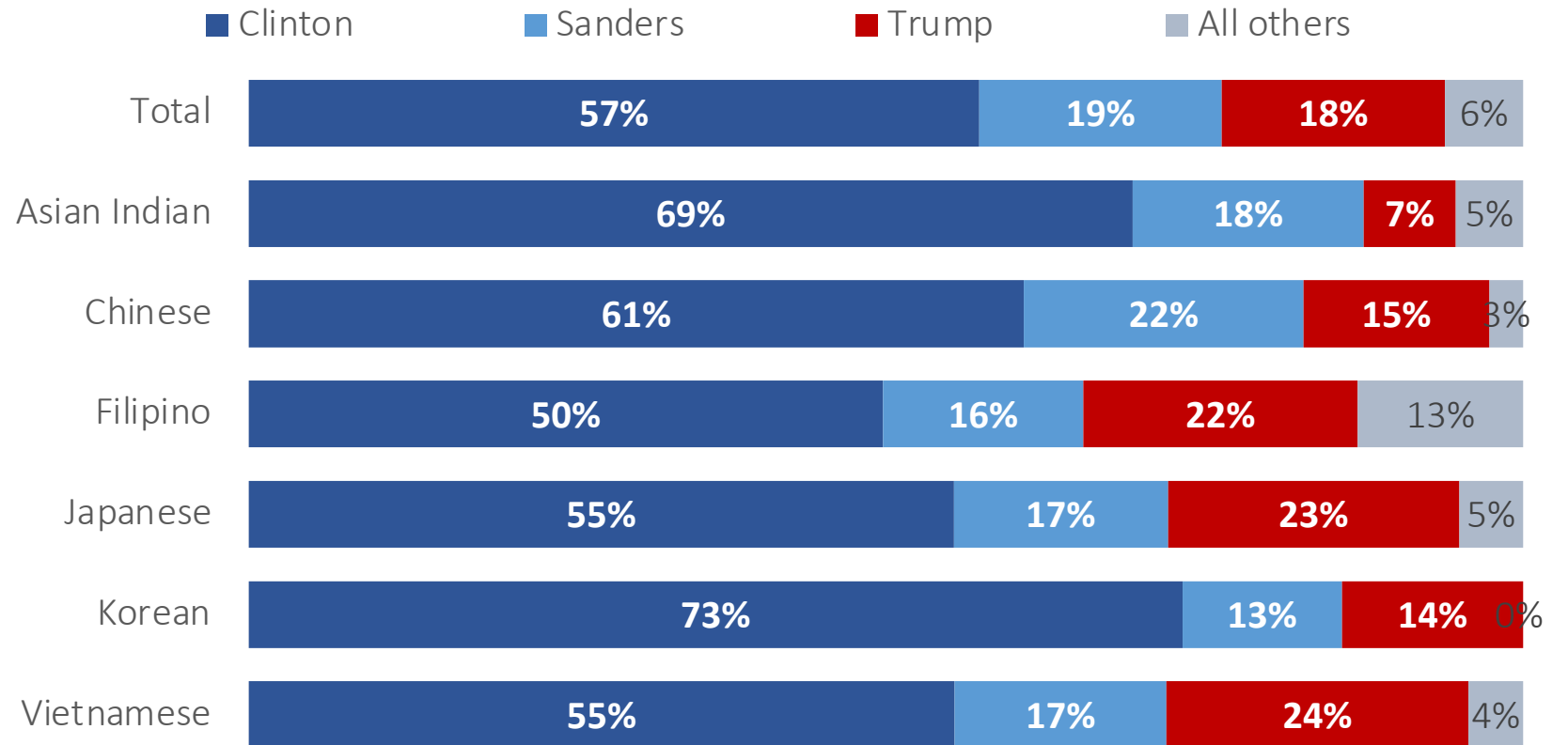


Source: NEP and VNS exit poll data, 1992-2016

# 2016 Primary Vote (NAAS)

“Which presidential candidate did you vote for in your state’s primary or caucus?”

Only 18% reported voting for Trump; 76% for Clinton or Sanders

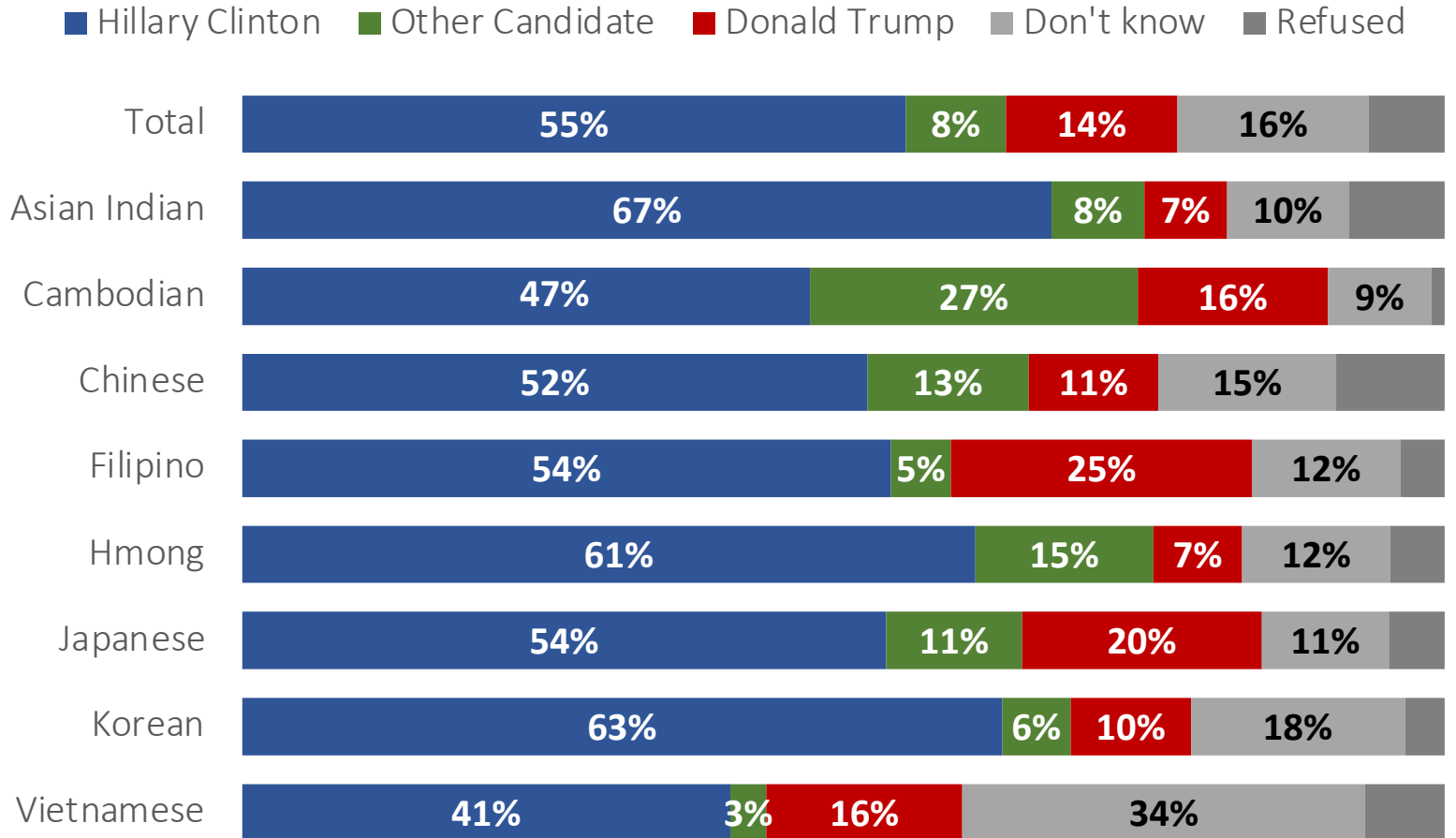


Source: Fall 2016 National Asian American Survey

# 2016 Vote Intention (NAAS)

“If the election were being held today would you be inclined to vote for Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump, or some other candidate?”

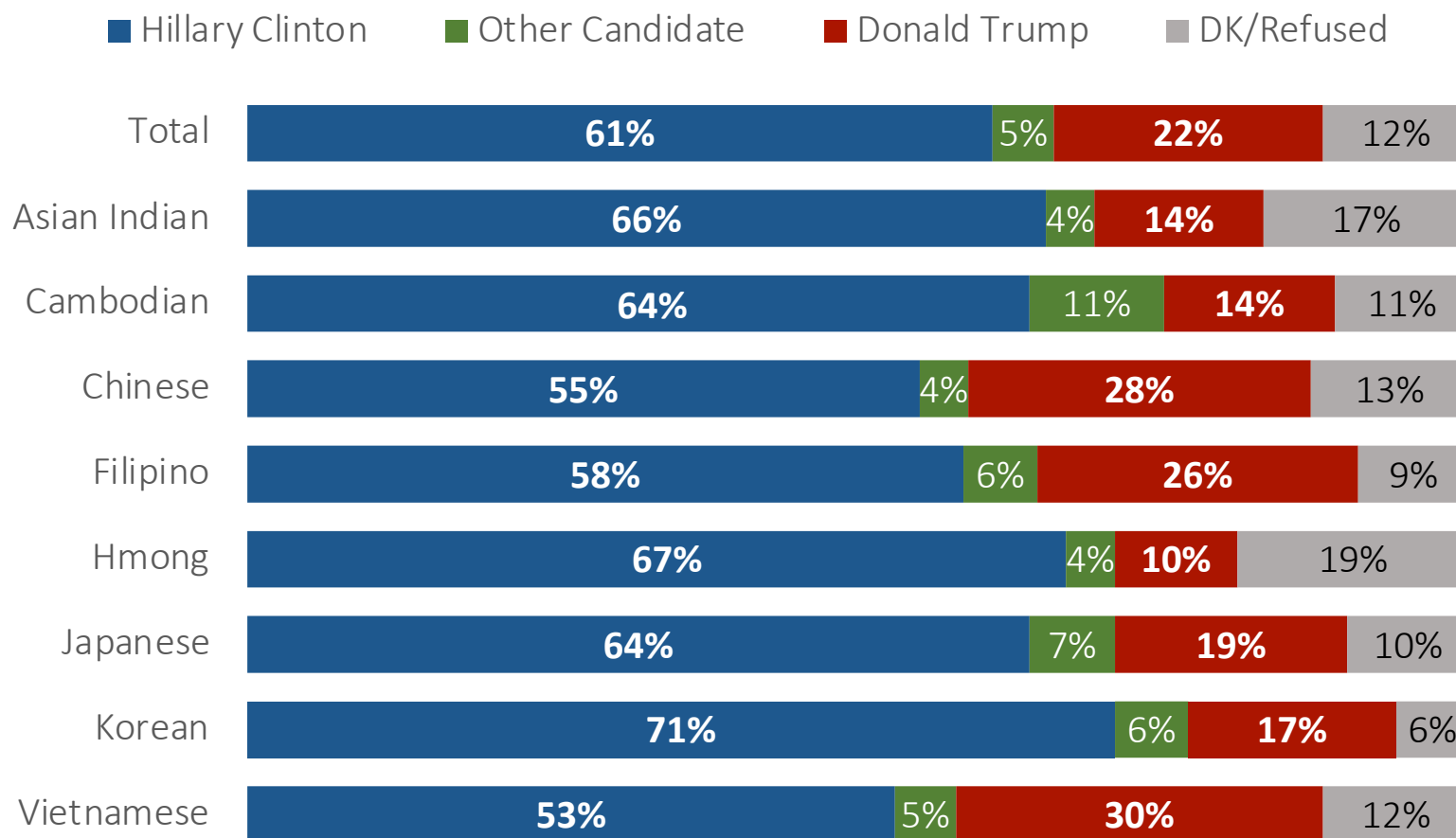
AAPI voters favored Clinton over Trump by a 4-to-1 margin



Source: Fall 2016 National Asian American Survey

# 2016 Vote Recall (NAAS)

- "Thinking about the past November election for President, did you vote for Hillary Clinton, Donald Trump, or some other candidate?"
- AAIs reported voting Clinton over Trump by a nearly 3-to-1 margin



Source: 2017 National Asian American Survey



# 2016 Election Eve Poll

2,391 Asian American voters

National sample of 863 ( $\pm 2\%$ )

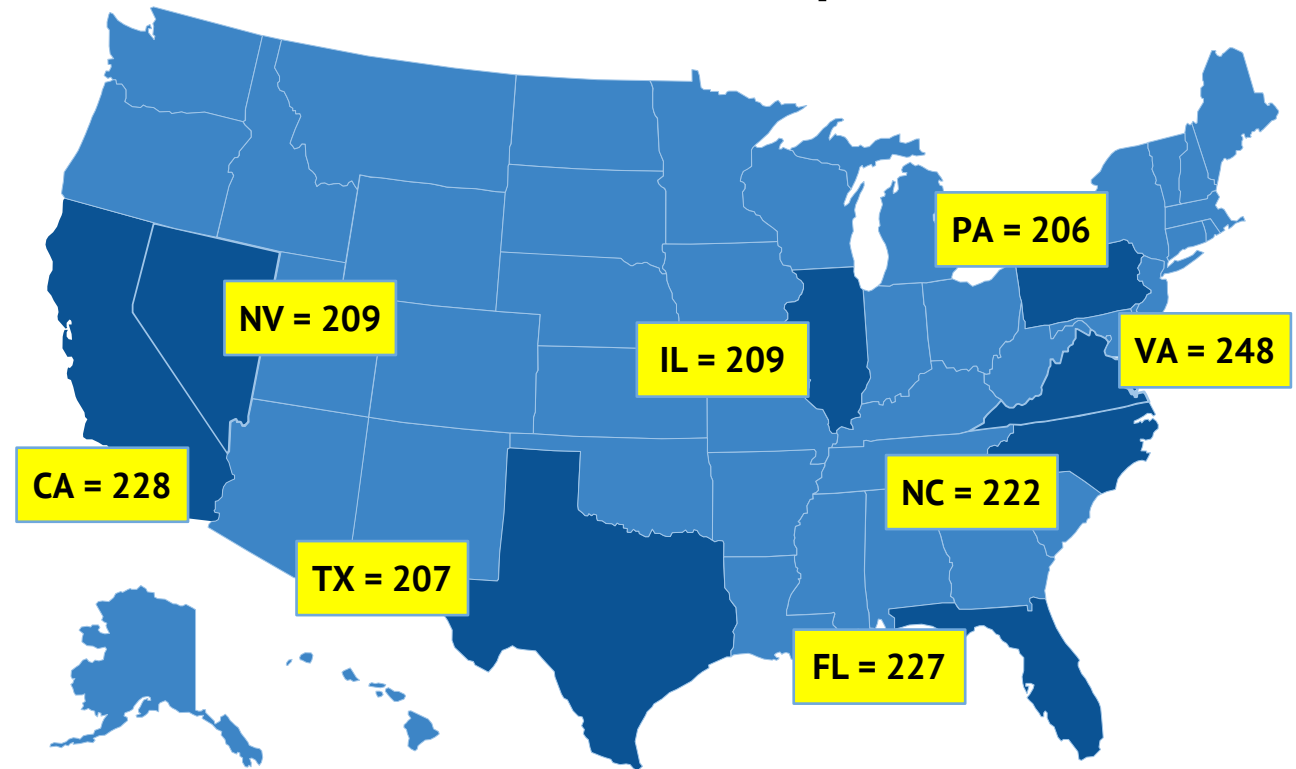
State samples in CA, FL, IL, NV, NC, PA, TX, VA ( $\pm 6.2$  to  $6.8\%$ )

Ethnic targets of Chinese, Indian, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, Vietnamese ( $\pm 4.4$  to  $6.7\%$ )

Interviews in English, Chinese, Filipino, Korean, Vietnamese

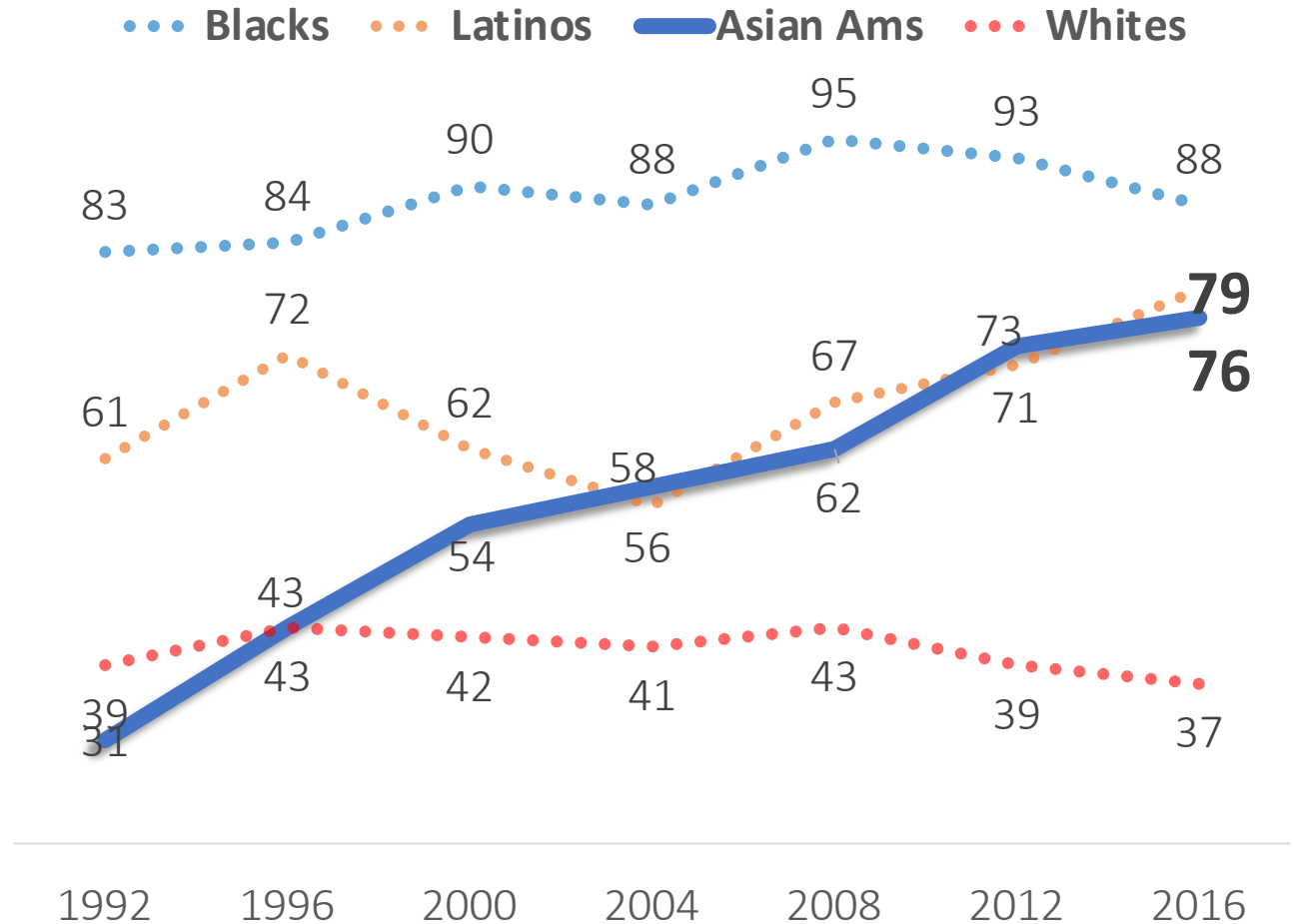
Field dates 11/1-11/7/16

**National Sample = 863**



# More Credible Numbers

- Asian languages at the point of contact. Landline, cellphone, and online.
- Sample on extreme high-propensity vote history plus new registrants;
- Sample with dedicated lists for high-propensity to be Asian (geography, surnames, consumption, etc.)
- Screen on completed vote or certainty to vote;
- Past samples validated at 88% positive for cast ballot.



# Asian Americans Are Turning Right

Shift in San Francisco politics serves as warning from Asian American voters to Democrats in 2024

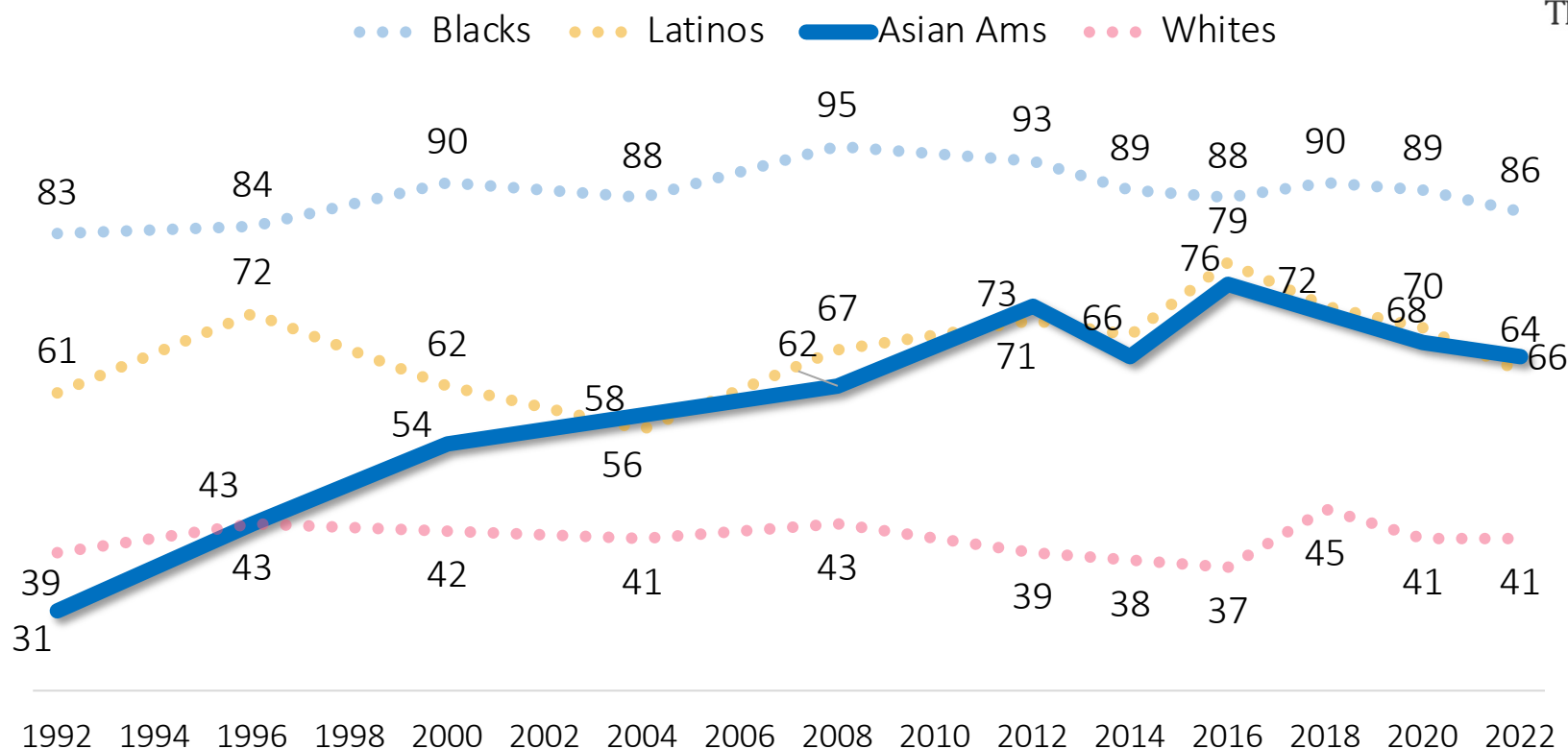
POLITICS

## GOP works to win over Asian Americans – and draws ‘race-baiting’ charges

The New York Times

### Asian Americans, Shifting Right

The new politics of class in America.



Still solidly blue.  
But less so than  
before.

# Keys to Surveying AAPIs: Sampling

- RDD is cost-prohibitive (nationally); telephone also \$\$\$ cf. online
- Coverage issues with list samples:
  - Propensity-based on names and clustering based on geography works for some subgroups, not all.
- Coverage issues with language: 3 in 4 adults are foreign-born, 1 in 3 are Limited English Proficient
  - But increasingly hard to contact and get cooperation from LEP AAPIs.
- Weights are tricky (complex design effects, post-stratification due to non-response + due to vendor list coverage, response rate bias, etc.)
- Unknown if known sources of response rate bias apply to AAPIs.



# Keys to Surveying AAPIs: Measurement

- More accurate measures of key indicators (vote choice, mobilization).
- Better measures of what is actually salient and relevant (e.g., issue agenda, candidate choice, sources of mobilization, knowledge).
- Context-specific measures re AAPI experiences and attitudes (discrimination, affirmative action).
- Within-group (AAPI sub-groups), between-group (AAPIs to others), and over-time comparisons.



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Survey Primer

Sampling:  
Polling AAPIs

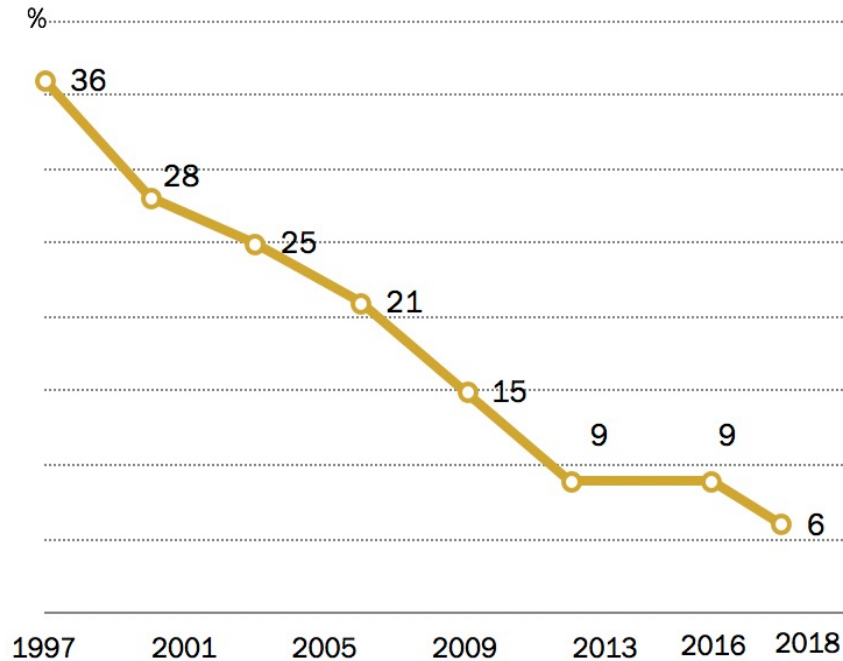
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# An Existential Threat to Survey Research?

Response rate by year (%)



Note: Response rate is AAPOR RR3. Only landlines sampled 1997-2006. Rates are typical for surveys conducted in each year.

Source: Pew Research Center telephone surveys conducted 1997-2018.

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER**

Source: Pew Research Center

Response rates to surveys, %



Source: National statistics

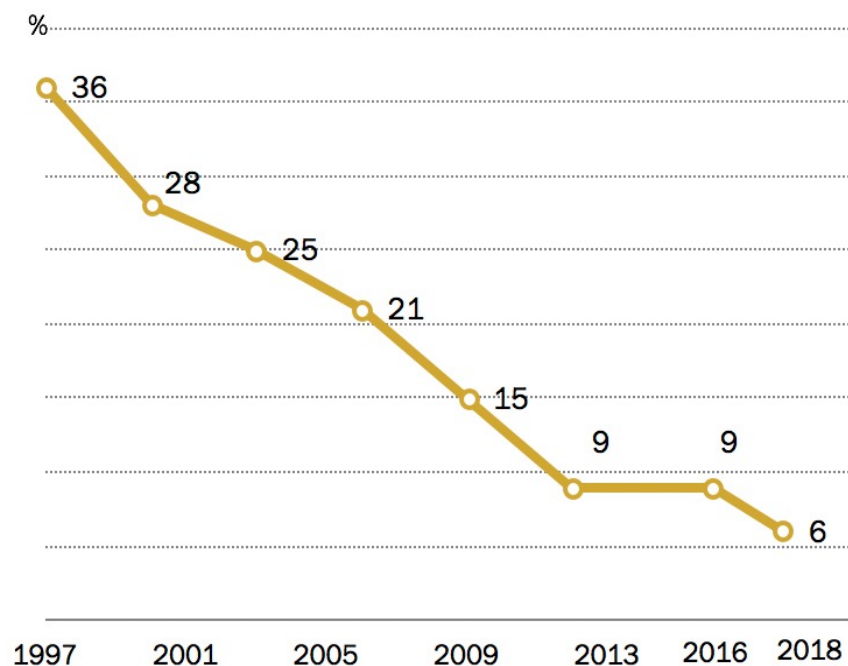
Source: *The Economist*

# Distinguishing Sources of Non-Response

- **Contact rate:**  $\# \text{ someone in household reached} \div \text{eligible units}$ . (3 AAPOR definitions)
- **Refusal rate:**  $\# \text{ of refusals or break-offs} \div \text{eligible units}$ . (3 AAPOR definitions)
- **Cooperation rate:**  $\# \text{ all cases interviewed} \div \text{eligible units contacted}$ . (4 AAPOR definitions)
- **Response rate:**  $\# \text{ completed} \div \text{eligible units}$ 
  - 6 AAPOR definitions, varying with treatment of partial interviews and cases of unknown eligibility



Response rate by year (%)



Note: Response rate is AAPOR RR3. Only landlines sampled 1997-2006. Rates are typical for surveys conducted in each year.

Source: Pew Research Center telephone surveys conducted 1997-2018.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

## Surveys Face Growing Difficulty Reaching, Persuading Potential Respondents

	1997	2000	2003	2006	2009	2012
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Contact rate</b> (percent of households in which an adult was reached)	90	77	79	73	72	62
<b>Cooperation rate</b> (percent of households contacted that yielded an interview)	43	40	34	31	21	14
<b>Response rate</b> (percent of households sampled that yielded an interview)	36	28	25	21	15	9

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Study. Rates computed according to American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) standard definitions for CON2, COOP3 and RR3. Rates are typical for surveys conducted in each year.

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## High-Effort Surveys Increase Contact and Cooperation Levels

	--1997--	--2003--	-----2012-----		
	Landline	Landline	Landline	Cell	Total
<b>Contact rate</b> (% of households in which an adult was reached)	%	%	%	%	%
Standard survey	90	79	62	62	62
High-effort survey	94	91	86	84	85

<b>Cooperation rate</b> (% of households contacted that yielded an interview)
---

Standard survey	43	34	16	11	14
High-effort survey	72	58	32	19	27

<b>Response rate</b> (% of households sampled that yielded an interview)
--

Standard survey	36	25	10	7	9
High-effort survey	61	50	27	16	22

PEW RESEARCH CENTER 2012 Methodology Study. Rates computed according to American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) standard definitions for CON2, COOP3 and RR3.

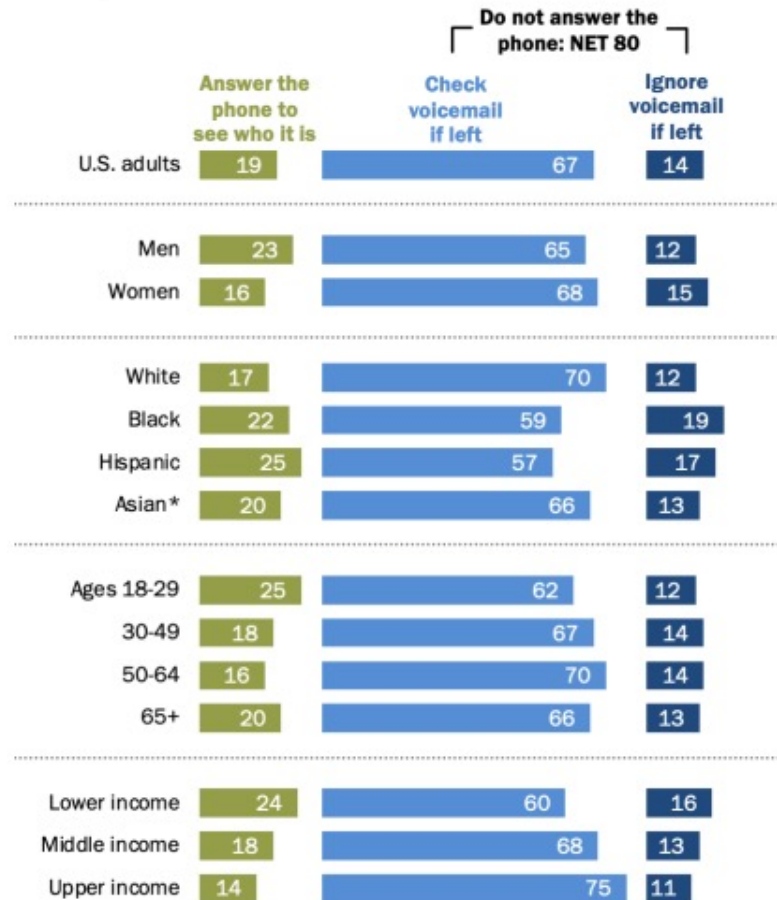
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# Factors Affecting Cooperation

- People are too busy, too hunkered down, too self-absorbed, too wary of scams and unwanted intrusions, too mindful of privacy to cooperate.
- Cooperation is affected by:
  - Level of effort used in recruiting respondents
  - Mode of data collection and interviewer skill (if interviewer-administered)
  - Incentives to participate and assurances re purpose and privacy
  - Survey content: length, sensitivity, cognitive load.
  - Sample characteristics: e.g., homeless, undocumented, Trumpers, 1%ers
  - Respondents' interest in the topic of the survey

# Cooperation in Phone Surveys

% of U.S. adults who say they generally \_\_\_ when an unknown number calls their cellphone



- 2020 Pew Study finds that only 19% of Americans pick up when an unknown number calls their cellphone.
- Men, non-whites, young adults, and lower income Americans are more likely to pick up the call.
- Most people check for a voicemail, but 1 in 7 ignore the call altogether.

\*Asian adults were interviewed in English only.

Note: White, Black and Asian adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. Family income tiers are based on adjusted 2018 earnings. Those who did not give an answer are not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted July 13-19, 2020.

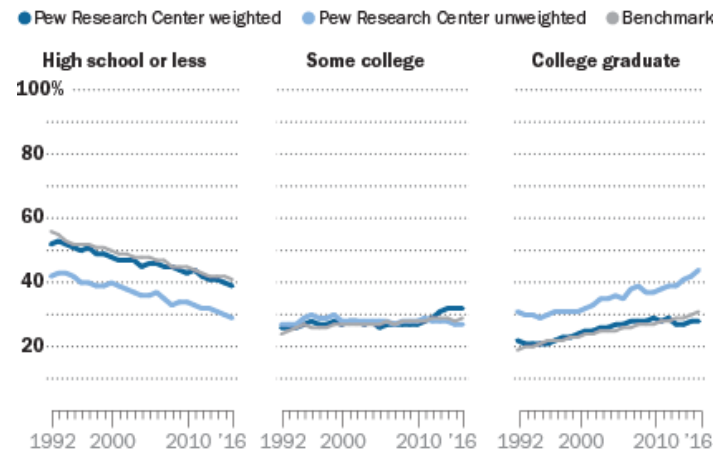


# Representativeness in Phone Surveys

Less educated, Latinx / AAPIs, young adults typically underrepresented in phone surveys

## Telephone surveys continue to overrepresent college graduates

% of respondents whose education level is ...



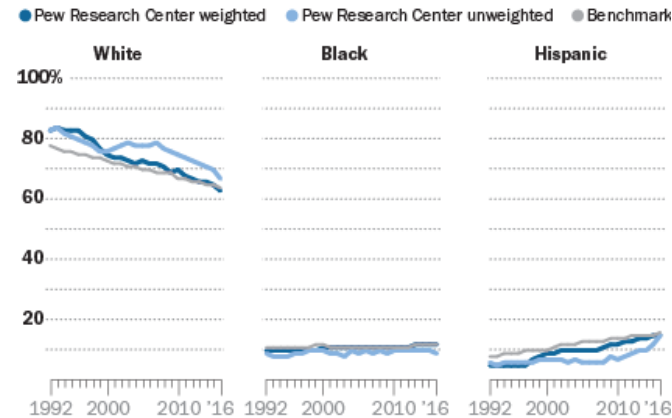
Source: CPS Annual Social and Economic Supplement and Pew Research Center surveys 1992-2016.

"What Low Response Rates Mean for Telephone Surveys"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

## Representation of Hispanics has improved in recent years

% of respondents who are ...



Note: Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race.

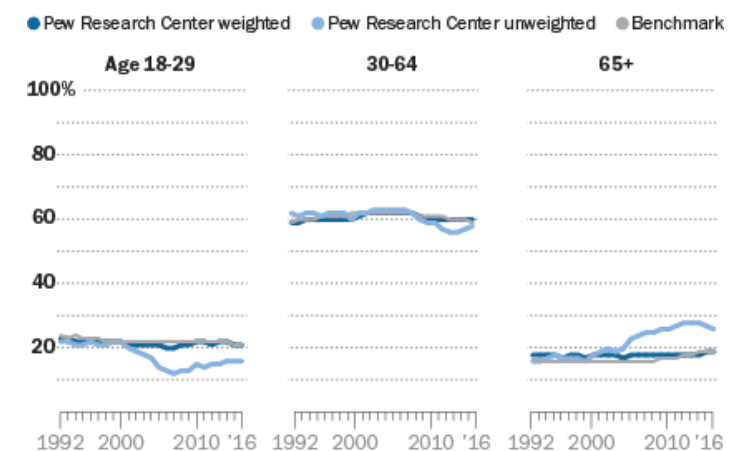
Source: CPS Annual Social and Economic Supplement and Pew Research Center surveys 1992-2016.

"What Low Response Rates Mean for Telephone Surveys"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

## Underrepresentation of young adults has lessened in recent years

% of respondents who are ...



Source: CPS Annual Social and Economic Supplement and Pew Research Center surveys 1992-2016.

"What Low Response Rates Mean for Telephone Surveys"

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# Much Ado About Nothing?

Keeter et al (2000)  
compared two surveys with  
same questionnaire but  
different field procedures  
and different response rates

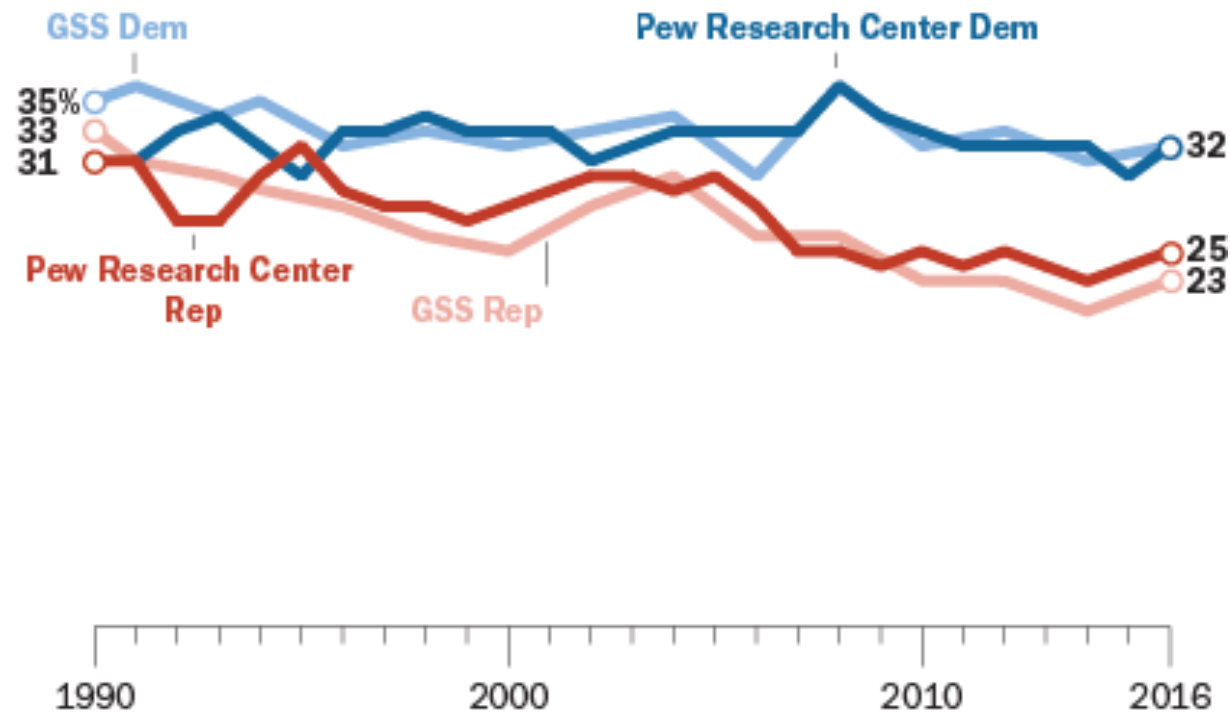
Design Feature	Standard	Rigorous
Length of field period	5 days	8 weeks
Respondent rule	Ask for youngest male at home; if no male at home, oldest female	Random selection
Advance letter	None	Yes, with \$2 bill
Interviewers	Less experience More minority More female	More experience More white More male

# Much Ado About Nothing?

- "standard" contact rate = 69%; cooperation rate = 58%; response rate = 36%
- "rigorous" contact rate = 92%; cooperation rate = 74%; response rate = 61%
- Results: Significant differences in 14/91 cases; mean difference (all 91 items) = 2%; Largest difference (9 percent) = interviewer rating of respondent interest
- Weakness: confounds many variables (respondent rule, advance letter, race and experience of interviewers, etc.)
- But is a 2000 study with 36% as a "low" response rate valid in a new regime of 1-5% response rates and online surveys with no calculable response rate?  
***What do more recent data have to say?***

# No Clear Partisan Bias

*% of respondents identifying with political party*



- Surveys like the GSS, with high response rates (50-60%) track pretty to Pew Research polls with low response rates on political measures like partisanship.

Source: Pew Research Center (2017)

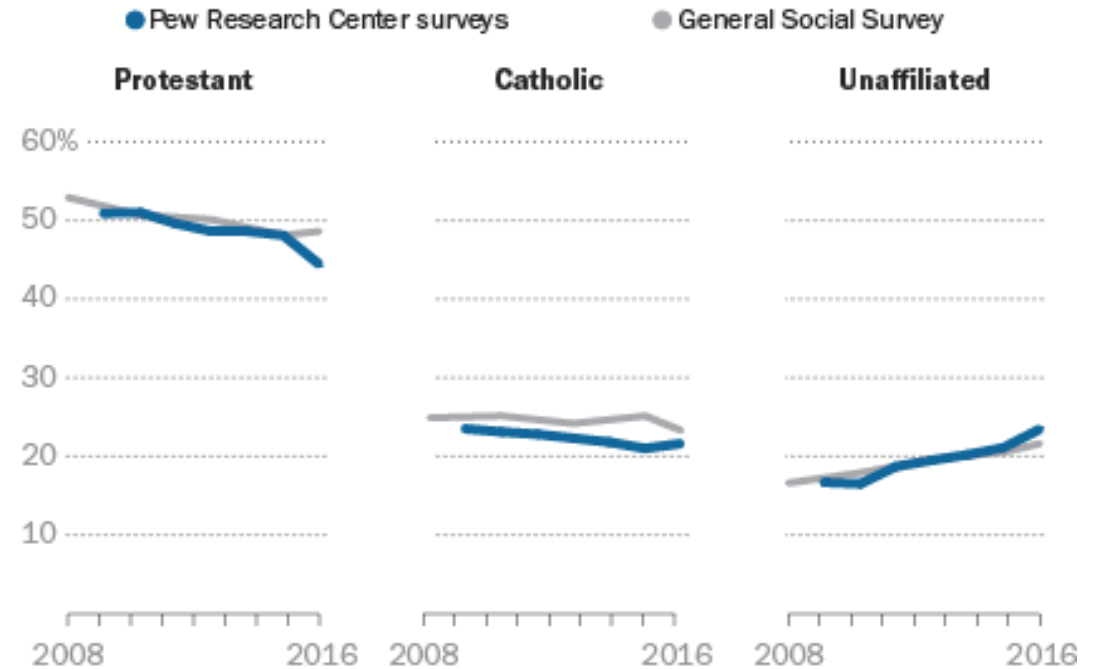


# Similar re Ideology, Religion

% of respondents describing their political views as \_\_\_\_



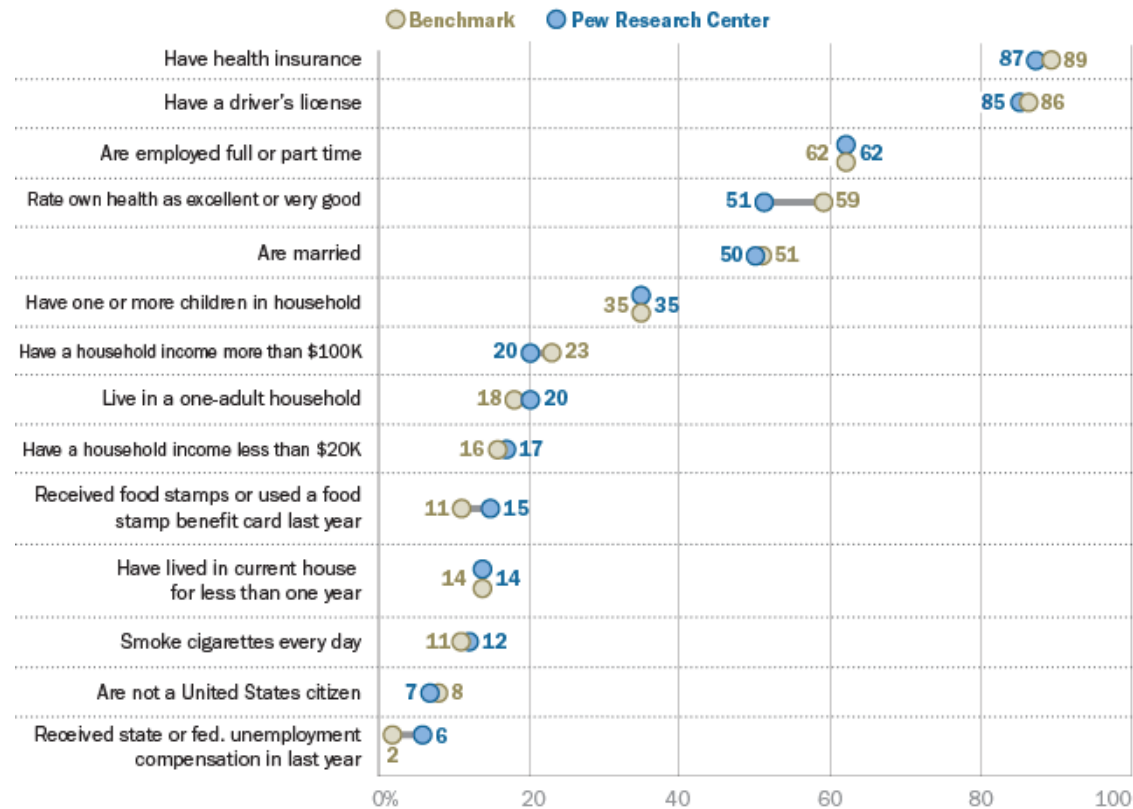
% of respondents describing their religious affiliation as \_\_\_\_



Source: Pew Research Center (2017)

# Overall, Minor Differences re Benchmarks

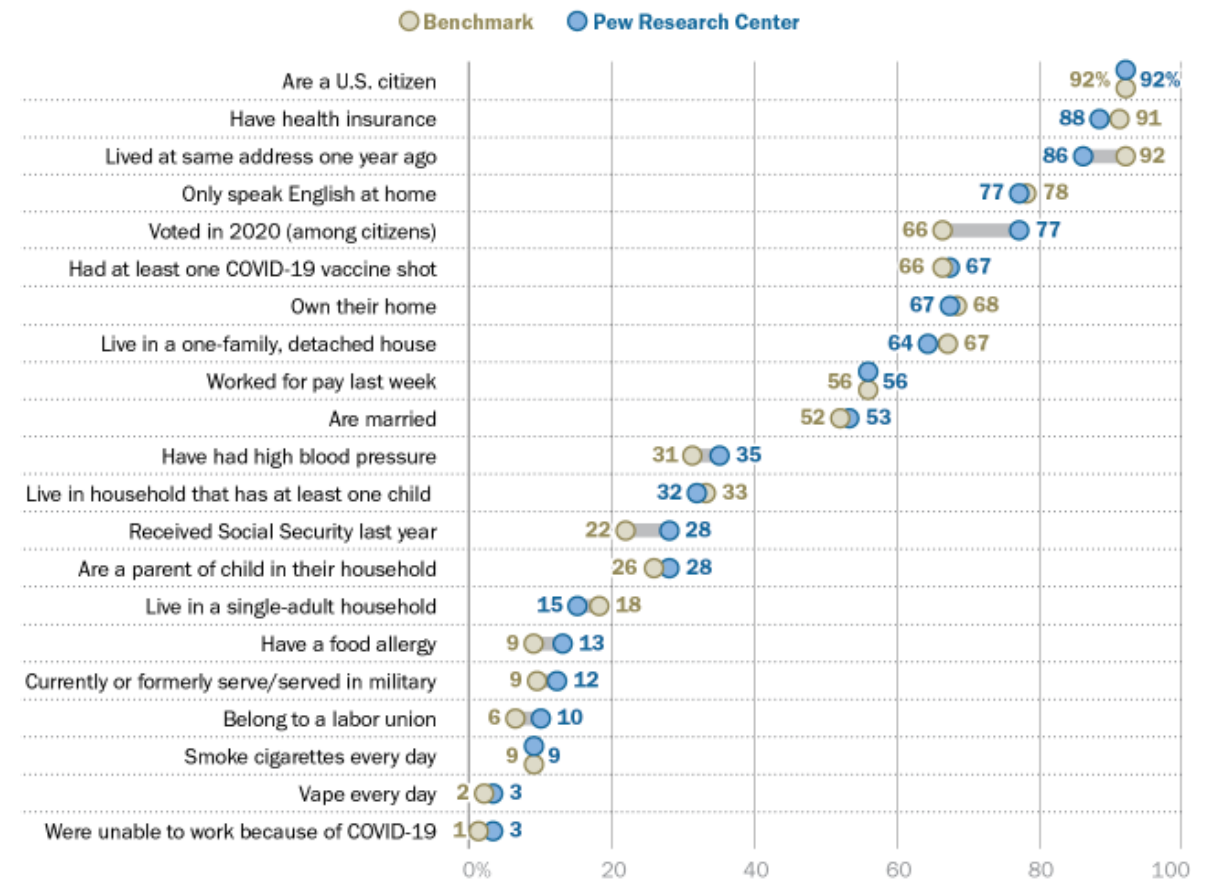
% who say they ...



Source: Survey conducted August 23 September 2, 2016. Benchmark estimates from 2015 American Community Survey and 2015 CPS Annual Social and Economic supplement. See appendix for details.  
 "What Low Response Rates Mean for Telephone Surveys"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER **2015**

% of U.S. adults who say they ...



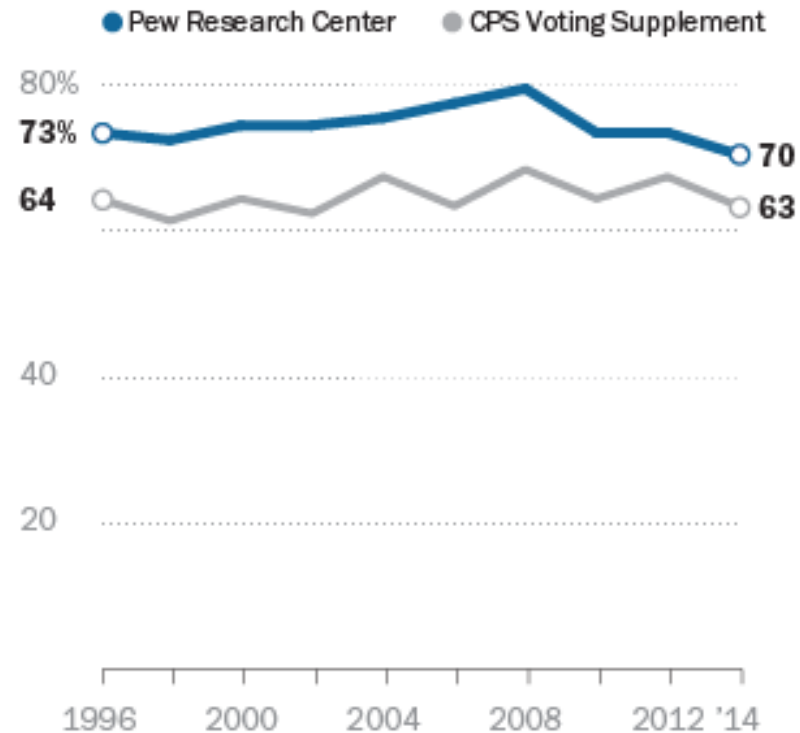
Note: A total of 10,606 panelists responded out of 11,699 who were sampled (91%). However, the cumulative response rate accounting for attrition and nonresponse to panel recruitments is 3%.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 14-27, 2021. See the "Benchmark sources" linked appendix for details on benchmark figures.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER **2021**

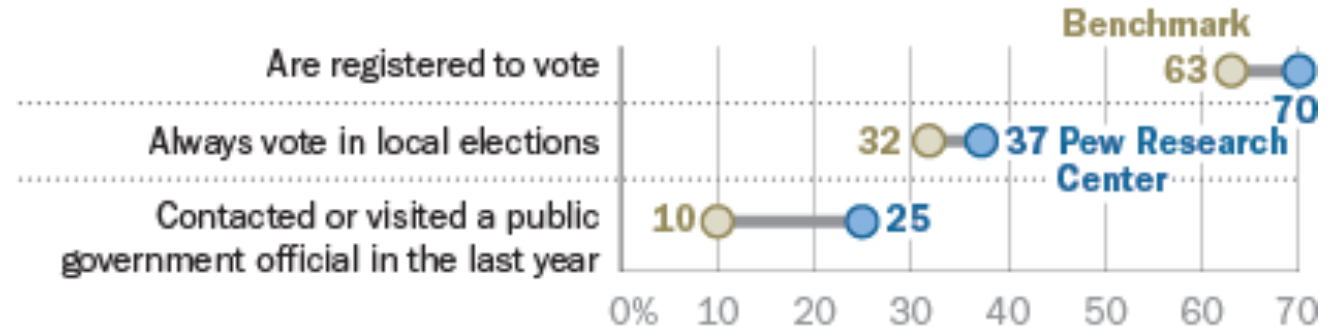
# RR and Political Engagement

% of respondents who are registered to vote ...



Sources: CPS November voting supplement and Pew Research Center surveys 1996-2014.  
 "What Low Response Rates Mean for Telephone Surveys"

% who say they ...



Note: Voting registration from the CPS was modeled using state-level voting data and the Hur-Achen adjustment. See methodology for details.

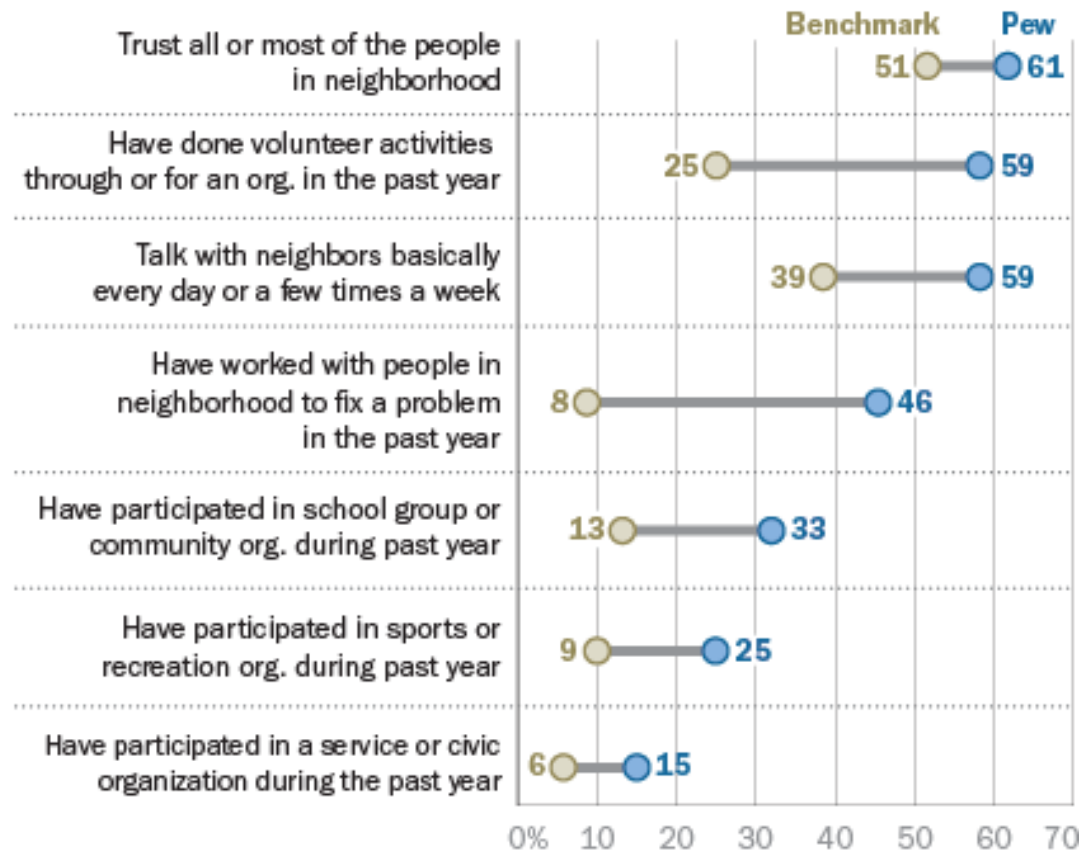
Source: Voter registration is an aggregate measure drawn from Pew Research Center telephone surveys in September and October 2014 and the Current Population Voting and Registration supplement. Pew Research Center estimates for contacting a public official and voting in local elections come from a survey conducted August 23 September 2, 2016. The benchmark estimates come from the 2013 CPS Civic Engagement supplement.

"What Low Response Rates Mean for Telephone Surveys"

Source: Pew Research Center (2017)

# RR and Civic Engagement

% who say they ...



Source: Survey conducted August 23 September 2, 2016.  
Benchmark estimates from 2013 CPS Civic Engagement supplement.  
"What Low Response Rates Mean for Telephone Surveys"

- Biggest differences between high RR benchmark surveys and Pew surveys found for civic engagement.
- *Is survey response akin to a measure of civic engagement?*

Source: Pew Research Center (2017)



# "Evaluating Online Nonprobability Surveys" (Pew, 2016)

- 10 nonprobability survey vendors estimates compared to federal population benchmarks: bias ranges from 5.8% to 10.1%
- Best performing vendor conditioned their sample on political variables (party, ideology, interest, registration). All sample overestimated volunteering (by 13 to 33%).
- Biases from weighted survey estimates compared to federal benchmarks were especially large for Latinos (8.3 to 19.8%) and also larger for blacks (8 to 14%). Biases also large for younger adults (7.1 to 16% for 18-29 y.o.)
- In multivariate regressions, "marginal effects associated with race and ethnicity are rarely correct."

The old conventional wisdom: telephone surveys are better than online surveys for parameter estimates of target populations of interest.

**Today's new frontier: Which is better? Which is worse?  
A probability-based telephone sample with a 1% response  
rate or non-probability based online sample?**

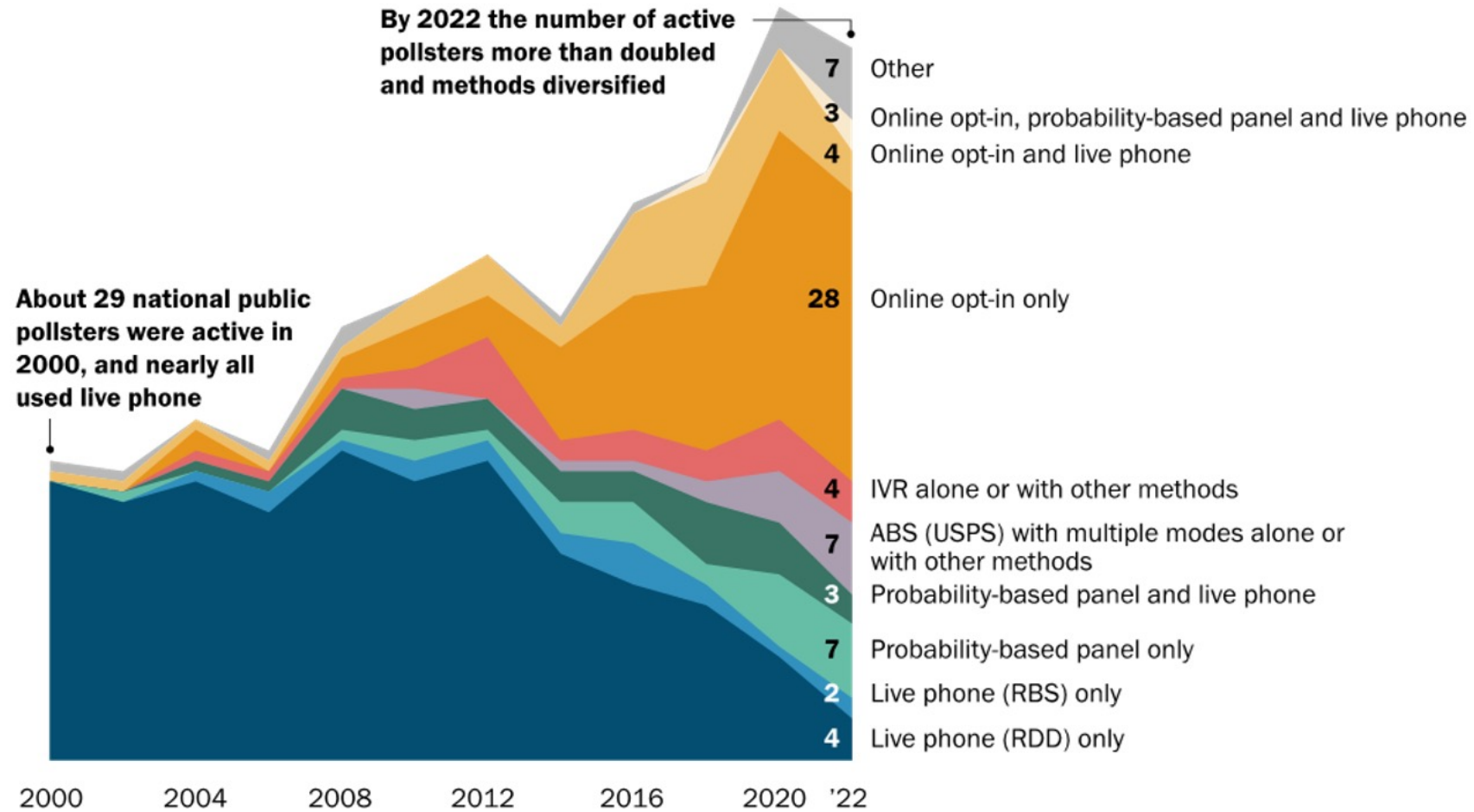
The value of both depend very heavily on adjustment weights. And do you weight on outcomes of interest, like civic and political engagement?

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# How Public Polling Has Changed in the 21st Century

*Number of national public pollsters in the U.S. using method(s)*



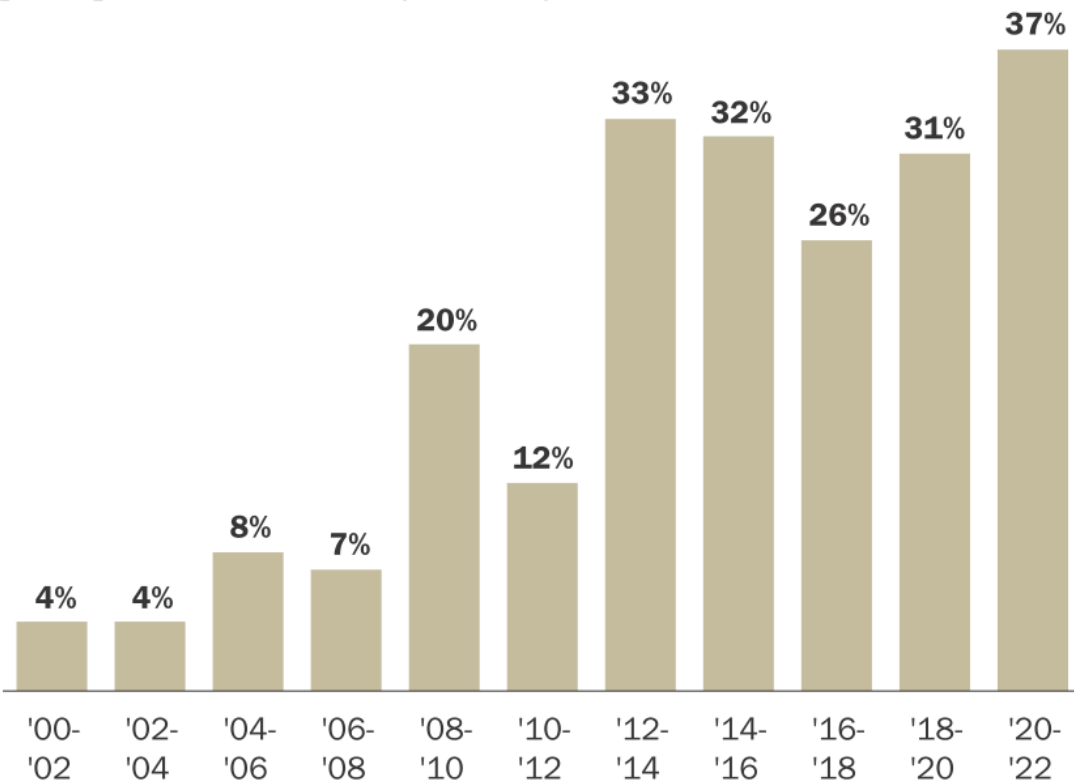
Note: Figures represent the number of active national public pollsters in each year and the method(s) that they used. IVR refers to interactive voice response, also known as robo-polling. ABS refers to address-based sampling. RBS refers to voter registration-based sampling. RDD refers to random-digit-dial sampling.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of external data. See Methodology for details.

"How Public Polling Has Changed in the 21st Century"



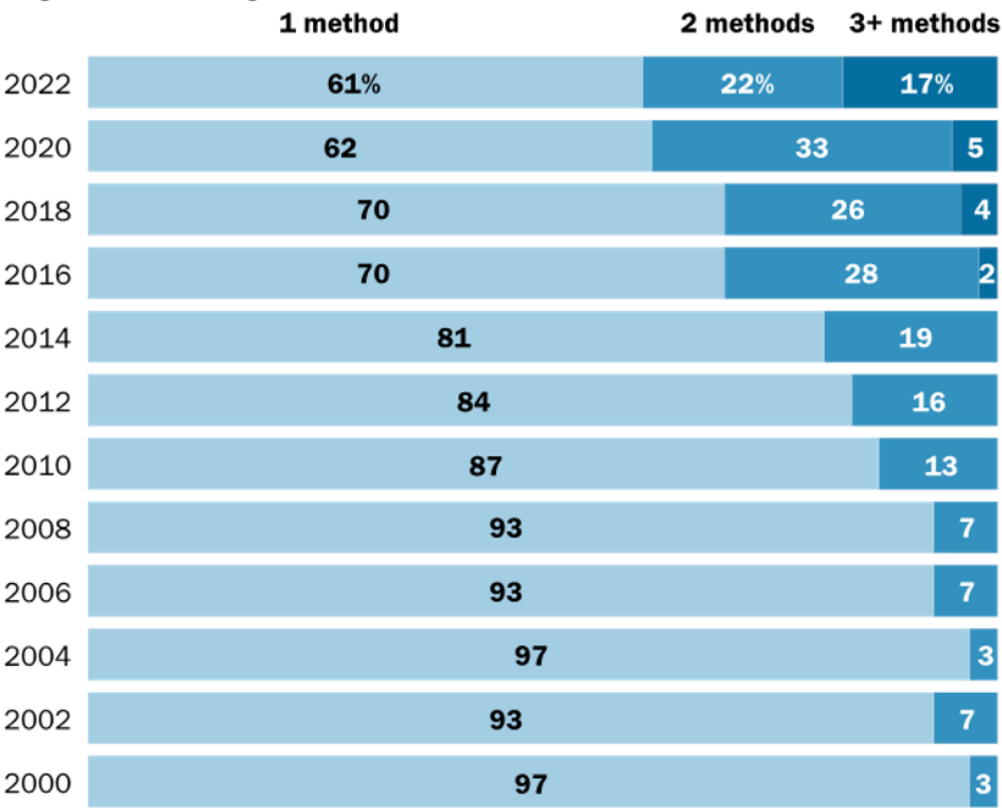
*% of pollsters who changed how they sample or interview people in national public polls in the U.S. during the two-year interval*



Note: In this study change refers to using a different sample source or a different mode of interviewing. Figures for each interval are based on the set of pollsters that released at least one national public poll in both the starting year and ending year of the interval.  
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of external data. See Methodology for details.  
“How Public Polling Has Changed in the 21st Century”

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*% of national public pollsters in the U.S. using this many methods in polls they released each year*



Note: A pollster is coded as using more than one method if they used more than one type of sample source (e.g., registered voter file, random-digit dial) or more than one interview mode (e.g., online, live phone).  
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of external data. See Methodology for details.  
“How Public Polling Has Changed in the 21st Century”

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# Do you know where your survey data come from?

Outsourcing data collection poses huge risks for public opinion

by Peter K. Enns and Jake Rothschild

## from the Cooperative Election Study (YouGov)

The sample drawn for the CCES were chosen from the YouGov Panel, along with the Dynata, Critical Mix, and Prodege panels using a six-way cross-classification (age  $\times$  gender  $\times$  race  $\times$  education  $\times$  region  $\times$  sample source). All respondents who completed the pre-election

## from the AP VoteCast (NORC)

### Nonprobability Sample

Nonprobability participants will include panelists from Dynata or Lucid, including members of its third-party panels. In addition, some registered voters will be selected from the voter file, matched to email addresses by V12, and recruited via an email invitation to the survey. Digital fingerprint software and panel-level ID validation is used to prevent respondents from completing the AP VoteCast survey multiple times.

## Polling data you can trust

Get accurate insight into who voted and why as soon as polls close on Election Day with data from AP VoteCast. For nearly 175 years, AP has tabulated election results and declared winners in U.S. elections. Now our rich and robust voter survey helps tell the whole story of the American democracy.

# The Data Outsourcing Problem

"Many of the most prominent companies in the industry were using Lucid to get data. Lucid, in turn, gets data for these companies by reaching out to hundreds of different data providers — potentially unknown to the original client."

Lucid partners with more than 350 global suppliers.

DISQO

ondevice  
research

tap research

prodege

qmee

GMO  
RESEARCH

BOVITZ

branded  
branded research inc.

Dalia

maru/

Tapjoy

dataSpring



# Enns and Rothschild Recs: Ask ...

- Are the data / respondents outsourced, or collected directly?
  - If "yes," request a full list of potential respondent sources, then run quality checks (e.g., AAPOR Transparency Initiative, Roper Transparency Score)
  - Also ask if any of those respondent sources collect directly or further outsource for respondents.
- Do any sources route respondents to complete consecutive surveys? (re: survey fatigue and satisficing)
- How many surveys can respondents take each week?
- What happens to someone who does not qualify for a survey? (incentives to falsify qualifications, survey fatigue)
- What is the compensation for participation, down the line of outsourcing?



# Thank you!

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